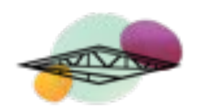


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Historical Summary of Events in Territories of the Ottoman Empire, Persia and Arabia

affecting the

British Position in the Persian Gulf, 1907-1928

(Previous Reference:—P.G. 4, Enclosure 1.)



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TABLE OF CONTENTS.

Part I.—Period before the War (1907-14).

	Pages
Chapter (1)—The Ottoman Empire (1907-14)	3-8
Chapter (2)—Persia (1907-14)	8-12
Chapter (3)—Arabia (Nejd, 1891-1914)	12-14

Part II.—Period of the War (1914-18).

Chapter (4)—The Ottoman Empire (1914-19)	15-21
Chapter (5)—Persia (1914-19)	21-25
Chapter (6)—Arabia (Nejd, 1914-19)	25-30

Part III.—Post-War Period (1918-28).

Chapter (7)—Iraq (1918-28)	30-32
Chapter (8)—Persia (1918-28)	32-34
Chapter (9)—Arabia (1918-28)	35-36
Chapter (10)—Mohammerah (1910-28)	36-37

—	Paragraphs.		Pages.	
Political Control in the Gulf		...		**39-41**
Arrangements prior to 1921		1 & 2	39	
Arrangements since 1921		3-5	39-40	
Persia and the maintenance of a "Political Resident" at Bushire		4	41	
Muscat, 1908-28		...		**43-59**
A. Administration		1-6	43-44	
B. History, 1908–4th October, 1913:				
Sultan Faisal		6	44	
Suppression of the Arms Traffic from Muscat ...		7-17	44-46	
C. Internal History of Muscat, 4th October, 1913–28:				
Sultan Taimur		18-42	47-51	
D. The Oman Rebellion, 1913–21		43-52	52-53	
E. Foreign Relations of Muscat, 1908-28		**53-62**	53-56	
France	53-57		53-55	
United States	58		55	
Holland	59		55	
Germany	60		55	
Persia	61		55-56	
Ibn Saud	62		56	
F. Miscellaneous Questions		**63-75**	56-58	
Muscat Order in Council, 1867-1915	63-64		56	
British Naval Base in Musandim Peninsula ...	65-71		56-58	
Gwadur	72-74		58-59	
Oil	75		59	
G. Summary		76-78	59-60	
H. Points referred to in connection with Persian Gulf Sub-Committee	79		60	
I. Views of Government of India	80		60	
Bahrein, 1908-28		...		**61-73**
A. Administration		1-6		61-62
B. Internal History (including relations with His Majesty's Government, 1908-28		7-18		62-65
1908–23—Sheikh Isa	8-14			62-64
1923–28—Sheikh Hamad	15-18			64-65
C. Oil		19	65	
D. External Relations, 1908-28		20-39	66-71	
Turkey and Bahrein	21		66	
Persia and Bahrein	22-37		66-70	
(i) 1908-22	22-25		66-67	
(ii) 1922-27	26-37		67-70	
Ibn Saud and Bahrein	38-39		70-71	
E. Summary		40-44	71-72	
Position of His Majesty's Government... ...		42-44	71-72	
F. Persian Gulf Sub-Committee		45	72	
G. Views of Government of India		46	72	



—	Paragraphs.		Pages.	
Kowelt, 1908–28		...		**73-86**
A. Administration		1–6	73	
B. Koweit Affairs, 1908–28		7–49	74–85	
(i) 1908–19	7–21		74–76	
(ii) 1919–28	22–49		76–85	
C. Internal Questions		24–29	77–79	
Koweit Order in Council	24–27		77–78	
Bunder Shweikh Lease	28		78–79	
Oil	29		79	
D. External Questions, 1919–28		30–49		
Ibn Saud—Koweit-Nejd-Iraq boundary questions	30–35		79–81	
Customs Dispute between Ibn Saud and Koweit	36–39		81–82	
The Akhwan Menace	40–42		82–83	
Relations with Iraq—Exemption from Taxation of Date Gardens of Sheikh of Koweit in Iraq ...	43–45		83–84	
Position of Koweit *vis-à-vis* Iraq	46–47		84	
Relations with Persia	48–49		84–85	
E. Summary		50–51	85	
F. Points referred to Sub-Committee		52	85	
G. Views of Government of India		53	86	
The Trucial Chiefs, 1908–28		...		**87-94**
A. Introductory		1–5	87	
B. Internal History, 1908–28		6	87–88	
Oil		7	88	
C. External Developments, 1908–28		8–23	88–91	
Ibn Saud and the Trucial Chiefs	9–15		89–90	
Reassertion of Persian Authority in the Gulf ...	16–23		90–91	
Sheikh of Henjam	18–19		90–91	
Tamb Incident	20		91	
Persia and the Independence of the Trucial Chiefs	21–23		91	
D. Summary		24–30	92–93	
E. Points referred to the Sub-Committee		31	93	
F. Views of Government of India		32	94	
El Katr, 1908–16		...		**95-96**
Tamb, Little Tamb, Abu Musa and Sirri ...		...		**97-104**
A. Introductory		1–4	97	
B. History prior to 1887...		5–9	97–98	
C. Occupation of Sirri by Persia, 1887		10–16	98–100	
D. Temporary Persian occupation of Abu Musa and Tamb, 1904		17–23	100-101	
E. Status of Sirri, 1909		24	101	
F. 1912–13—Tamb Lighthouse—Communications to Persia and Sheikh of Shargah		25–28	101-102	
G. Statements made to Germany as to ownership of Abu Musa, 1907–14		29	102	
H. Reassertion of Persian claim to Tamb and Abu Musa, 1923		30–31	102	
I. Persian Customs interference at Abu Musa, 1925–26		32	103	
J. Reassertion of Persian claim to Tamb (and Abu Musa), 1929		33–34	103	
K. Summary		35–39	103–104	
Status of certain Groups of Islands in the Gulf		...		**105-108**
Henjam		...		**109-116**
Introductory		1–4	109	
International Status of Henjam		5 & 6	109–110	
British Telegraph Concession at Henjam		7–17	110–112	
1926–28—Reassertion of Persian claims		18–23	112–113	
Henjam Wireless Station...		24	113	
Sheikh of Henjam and Persia, 1904–29		25–34	113–114	
Summary		35–39	115	
Points referred to Sub-Committee		40	115–116	
Views of Government of India		41–42	116	



——	Paragraphs.	Pages.	
Basidu	...		**117-122**
Introductory	1	117	
Extent of British Concession	2	117	
Status of Basidu	3-12	117-119	
1868-1926	13-16	119	
Reassertion of Persian claims, 1926-28	17-26	119-121	
Summary	27-28	121	
Points referred to Sub-Committee	29	122	
Views of Government of India	30	122	
British Consular Representation in El Hasa and Katr	...		**123-124**
Wireless Stations in the Gulf	...		**125-127**
Early history, 1904-13	1-3	125	
Erection of present stations, 1913-17	4-6	125-126	
Persian request for removal of stations, 1922 ...	7	126	
Persian prohibition of import of wireless spare parts, 1927	8-9	126	
Desiderata of His Majesty's Government	10-11	126-127	
Summary	12	127	
Air Communications in the Gulf	...		**129-133**
Air Route along the Persian Shore...	...	129-130	
Persian attitude towards use of route by regular Civil Air Service	...	130-131	
Air Route along Arabian Shore	...	131-133	
Slavery in the Persian Gulf...	...		**135-138**
Introductory	1	135	
Treaty Engagements of Arab States	2	135	
Treaty Engagements of Persia	3	135	
Present position on Arab littoral	5	136	
Present position on Persian littoral	6	136	
Persian representations regarding abrogation of Slavery Convention of 1882 with Great Britain	7-10	136-137	
Attitude to be adopted towards such a demand by His Majesty's Government	11-14	137-138	
Lighting and Buoying, 1908-28	...		**139-144**
1. First reconstruction, 1909-14	1-6	139-140	
2. 1914-25—Expansion	7-15	140-141	
3. Administration and Finance	16-19	141	
4. Relations with Persia	20	141-142	
5. Conclusions and views of Government of India ...	21-27	142-143	
6. Appendix	...	144	
Quarantine Control in the Persian Gulf ...	...		**145-150**
Arms Traffic	...		**151-154**
Introductory	1-2	151	
Treaty Engagements of States bordering on the Gulf ...	3	151	
Arms Traffic Conventions of 1919 and 1925... ...	4-7	151-153	
Arms Traffic in the Gulf, 1908-28	8-15	153-154	
Summary	16	154	
Persian Complaints of Smuggling	...		**155-156**
Oil Interests in the Gulf	...		**157**
Trade in the Gulf	...		**159-162**
General	...	159-160	
Koweit and Muscat	...	160-161	
Position of British Trade...	...	161-162	
Persian Coasting Trade	...		**163-164**
Appendix: Précis of Treaties and Engagements between His Majesty's Government and Rulers of the Arab Coast and Persian Gulf	...		**165-170**
MAPS (in pocket at end):			
I. Persia and Afghanistan: 44 miles to 1 inch.			
II. The Persian Gulf and Islands (showing boundaries of Koweit and the Air Route).			



(4)

Historical Summary of Events in Territories of the Ottoman Empire, Persia and Arabia affecting the British Position in the Persian Gulf, 1907–1928.

ANY outline of events in the regions and during the twenty years embraced by this summary has to deal with events of three distinct and dissimilar periods.

This memorandum therefore is divided into three Parts, each covering one of these periods :—

PART I.—Before the War (1907–14).
PART II.—The War (1914–19).
PART III.—After the War (1919–28).

In each Part each country or district dealt with is assigned a separate chapter.

PART I.—BEFORE THE WAR (1907–14).

Chapter (1).—The Ottoman Empire (1907–14).

The conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907 having caused Russia to abandon her opposition to Great Britain in the Persian Gulf, the policy of His Majesty's Government in that region was thereafter concerned chiefly with Germany and Turkey. This policy was now directed to ensuring that, under the new conditions to be created by the completion of the Bagdad Railway, the long-established British position in Lower Mesopotamia and the Gulf should be not only confirmed but maintained in all its essentials.

To this end a series of Anglo-Turkish and Anglo-German conventions and agreements were negotiated and signed—or initialled*—between 1908 and the beginning of 1914. The Anglo-German Convention of the 6th May, 1913, dealt chiefly with the Bagdad Railway. Among other conditions it provided that the terminus of the railway was to be at Basra, and not on the coastline of the Gulf, as fixed by the Concession of 1903; and that the construction and exploitation of the ports of Bagdad and Basra, also included in the concession, were to be renounced by the railway company in favour of a Turkish company. The German Government also recognised the British position on the Shatt-el-Arab and in the Persian Gulf. Other agreements confirmed British navigation rights on the Tigris and Euphrates, and provided for the definite demarcation of the Turco-Persian frontier from the Gulf to Mount Ararat.

In the Anglo-Turkish Convention of July 1913, Koweit was recognised as an autonomous kaza of the Ottoman Empire; its boundaries were defined, and interference by the Turkish Government in the affairs of the kaza excluded.

The same convention fixed the eastern limits of Turkish Arabia as a line drawn due south from the coast near Ojair (opposite to the island of Bahrein) to the 20th degree of latitude. It admitted that the province of El Hasa, on the coast of the Gulf, was "an Ottoman Sanjak of Nejd." But it also secured the abandonment of Turkish pretensions to sovereignty over the peninsula of El Katr and the Bahrein Islands, and obtained Turkish recognition for the Sheikh of Bahrein as an independent prince.

On the 9th March, 1914, yet another Anglo-Turkish convention was concluded. It defined the southern boundary of Turkish Arabia from the Red Sea to the point on the 20th latitude reached by the eastern boundary already laid down.

Between 1906 and 1914, therefore, the British position in Lower Mesopotamia, Persia, Arabia and the Persian Gulf had been clearly defined, made the subject of agreements with Russia, Germany and Turkey, and had received the recognition of those Powers respectively concerned.

While British interests in the Persian Gulf were thus being confirmed, movements were in progress in the Ottoman Empire, Persia and Arabia, destined to create entirely new problems for British policy.

* The Anglo-Turkish Convention of May 1913 and the Anglo-German Convention of March 1914 were not signed owing to the outbreak of war in 1914.



The first clear manifestation of the forces at work in the Ottoman Empire became visible in the revolution of 1908. Under the rule of Sultan Abdul Hamid no interruption could be detected in the decline of the Empire; though the Sultan was astutely cultivating, with considerable success among Moslem peoples under Christian rule, the conception of pan-Islamism he had made his own.

But this theocratic movement, however much it might appeal to Moslem populations living under infidel Governments, was opposed to the spirit and theories animating the reformers, who called themselves Young Turks. Disruption of the Empire was threatened by the subversive aims of its non-Turkish, or subject peoples. By the revolution of 1908 the Young Turks proposed to secure equality and concord among all Ottoman peoples on the basis of liberty under a real Constitution, and to create a sense of Ottoman citizenship in which all should find equal satisfaction. The ideal was speedily rejected by the subject races after they had examined the prospects it offered them. Nor, it must be confessed, did the Young Turks themselves, as represented by the Committee of Union and Progress,* contribute much in practice towards making it acceptable to their non-Turkish compatriots.

The policy of "Ottomanisation" having failed, the Government of Young Turks fell back upon "Turkification." The subject races had rejected the olive branch; they were now to be made into sufficiently good Turks, in all but blood and faith, by the application of compulsion.

This policy was being enforced during the Turko-Italian war of 1911, which resulted in the loss of the Ottoman provinces in Africa. In the course of this struggle no efforts were spared to exploit pan-Islamism for the help of the Empire in its extremity, but little external support was forthcoming. Thereafter, except as propaganda, pan-Islamism was discredited as a political force in the eyes of Turkish leaders.

The policy of "Turkification" rigorously applied in the Balkan vilayets, did much to bring about the Balkan war of 1912 and the loss of the Ottoman provinces in Europe. It was recognised then that this policy, also, had failed. Meanwhile, another movement, to be defined as pan-Turkism, a much narrowed and geographically practicable form of pan-Turanianism, had been taking shape at the hands of a group of Turkish Nationalists.

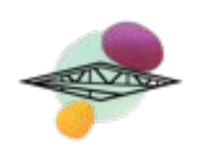
In the scheme of national re-creation elaborated by these pan-Turk intellectuals, the non-Turkish races of the Empire, except, perhaps, the Circassians and Lazis, were to be rejected as worthless, and the Turkish population of Anatolia taken as the only reliable human material. These people were to be instilled with a sort of tribal patriotism having its roots in the Turkish homeland in Central Asia, and its inspiration in the early history of the Turkish tribes. In addition, the idea of a Turkish Irredenta was to be created and fostered, embracing the Moslem areas of Caucasia, the north-western part of Persia, and the trans-Caspian region, which was the ancient cradle of the race. The pan-Turks also hoped that in time Persia herself might be glad to fill the position of "Bavaria to a Turkish Prussia."

Such were the more important aims of pan-Turkish national policy that would directly affect foreign Powers. But the scheme also included a whole body of internal reforms—constitutional, religious, legal, educational, social—founded largely on Western ideas, that, if effected, would profoundly change the customs, habits and outlook of the Turkish people.

The scheme might have been thought fantastic, but it proved to have within it the spark of living force. It came, too, at the right moment for acceptance by a people conscious of their native hardihood and endurance in war and of possessing a traditional aptitude for conquest, yet somehow long condemned to military disaster and the humiliation of ceding territory. From the close of the first Balkan war onwards, the teachings of pan-Turkism found acceptance, first by the C.U.P. and then by the Government—who hastened to give it official blessing and active support, and to use it for their own ends. It would be idle to suppose that before or during the European War pan-Turkism did much to influence the great mass of ignorant peasantry; what happened after 1919 is, however, another matter. But it is not open to doubt that by the end of 1914 the movement had been eagerly adopted by a considerable and ever-widening and deepening upper stratum of the population, and that it was this upper stratum that counted.

A result of the disasters of the first Balkan war had been to shake German influence in Turkey. But the German position there was based on the traditional Turkish dread of Russia compelled by two and a half centuries of steady

* For convenience this body will be referred to hereafter as the C.U.P.



aggression, and rendered oppressive by the declared Russian purpose of acquiring Constantinople and the Straits. Since the conclusion of the Anglo-Russian Convention in 1907, Russia had been a member of the *Entente* group of Powers in opposition to Germany. For Turkey, therefore, Germany had the appearance of being the natural and adequate ally against Russia. Nor had any Ottoman Government been able to oppose this view, especially when presented by Baron Marschall von Bieberstein, the able and dominating German Ambassador at Constantinople. Furthermore, the personal interests of Enver Pasha and his group who formed the Ottoman Government in 1912 were too deeply involved with those of Germany for the set-back to German influence to be other than temporary.

And now the eastern ambitions of the pan-Turks began to take definite shape. It is clear that Enver and the C.U.P. became convinced that a great European struggle was approaching in which the Russian danger might be removed, and which might also provide opportunities hitherto unexpected for the realisation of pan-Turkish territorial dreams. From the end of 1912 onwards the chief concern of the Ottoman Government lay in preparing, with German assistance, for the struggle supposed to be impending. But this apparent unity of purpose between the two Powers was attended by very definite Turkish reservations, so far unexpressed. German policy aimed at making the utmost use of Turkey, both in war and peace, for purely German ends. The Ottoman Government, for their part, intended, in the event of war, to prosecute to the utmost their pan-Turkish territorial ambitions in the East without undue regard to more strictly German interests. They intended, too, that German Eastern policy as expressed in the Bagdad Railway should not be allowed to develop to a point prejudicial to Turkish rights and interests.

In May or June 1914 conversations were begun for the Turco-German Treaty of Alliance, which is now known to have been concluded on the 2nd August of the same year. As to what the actual provisions of this treaty were we are still in ignorance. Only three members of the Turkish Government seem to have taken part in the negotiations or to have been aware that they were in progress; and the fact that a treaty had been signed was known to but few others for some time. Extraordinary precautions were taken, also, to keep the terms of the treaty secret; and when, after the Armistice of Mudros, the Turkish Government of the time called for the treaty it could not be found, having by then been removed to safety or destroyed.

But apart from evidence afforded by subsequent events there are strong grounds* for believing that, either in this treaty or some related instrument, the question of Turkish expansion eastward was dealt with by Germany to the satisfaction of the Turkish leaders.

From the beginning of hostilities in August 1914 until the end of October His Majesty's Government made every effort to ensure that Turkey should remain neutral. But the position was much more unfavourable for the success of these efforts than appeared at the time. Enver Pasha and his group had already pledged their country to support Germany, and Turkey's delay in entering the war was due rather to the backwardness of her military preparations than to any hesitation of policy.

It is true that, immediately after the British declaration of war on Germany, Enver Pasha suddenly made apparently sincere overtures for a Treaty of Alliance with Russia, which the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople took very seriously, and which impressed his Government. But this remarkable move was prompted by German instructions to divert the "Goeben" and "Breslau" from the Dardanelles to Pola, a decision Enver and his group regarded as absolutely disastrous to Turkish interests, and their own. As soon as the "Goeben" and her consort had returned to the Straits the cause of Enver Pasha's oscillation was removed.

Whatever the possibility may have been before the 10th August that Turkey might be restrained from siding with Germany, it was vastly diminished after the two vessels reappeared in the Dardanelles—not only because in theory they enabled the War party to dominate the capital and overawe opposition, but chiefly because only by means of the "Goeben" could Turkish command of the Black Sea sufficient for the purposes of the War party be assured. To securing this command Enver and his group attached immense importance, for reasons that generally have been over-

* At the end of 1918 Mustafa Kemal Pasha told Colonel T. E. Lawrence that the German Government had given a pledge that if the war ended in German victory Turkey would be placed in possession of the Moslem Provinces of Caucasia, North-West Persia and the Transcaspian region, and that it was this pledge which had brought Turkey into the war.



looked. Enver's personal ambitions, the demands of the Pan-Turks, and the national tradition of Russia as the mortal enemy, all required the chief Turkish military effort to be directed against Caucasia. As long as Turkey held command of the Black Sea, the line of communications for her armies on the eastern front would be by water to Trebizond, and thence by the great road—constructed more than fifty years ago and maintained for the requirements of Turkish defence against Russia on this front—to the fortress of Erzerum. In point of time it saved weeks; in point of capacity for marching troops and heavy traffic no other route compared with it. In fact, the success of the military operations the War party had in view, and the immediate and dazzling triumph Enver saw in prospect for himself, were only to be achieved by use of the Black Sea route to Trebizond. And after having retaken the provinces lost to Russia in 1878 and reoccupied Batum—as was hoped might be done—control of the Black Sea route would be more necessary than ever for the further operations contemplated. In the absence of the two new Turkish battleships requisitioned in England by His Majesty's Government on the outbreak of war, all the hopes of the C.U.P. and the Pan-Turks, all the fortunes of Enver Pasha and the ruling group, hung upon the "Goeben." The return of this vessel caused the War party to be as anxious for war against Russia as ever.

To this extent then had German policy in Turkey, directed to reaching the Persian Gulf, been successful. The Ottoman Empire was now to be thrown into the struggle under leaders deeply committed to Germany, yet compelled, by Turkish feeling, and resolved, in furtherance of their own ambitions, to attempt the realisation of Turkish Nationalist war aims widely at variance with those of their great ally.

Chapter (2).—Persia (1908-14).

Persian history during the last twenty years has been greatly influenced by the development of national feeling, though not in the violent and surprising form exhibited in Turkey during the same period. The quickening of dry bones in Persia preceded the similar movement in Turkey and furnished example and encouragement to the Young Turks of 1907–8.

Popular resentment against the granting of valuable concessions to foreigners by the Shah, and the gathering force of a demand for constitutional liberty had become visible to the world by 1905. Rapidly gaining in strength, the constitutional movement had extorted the greater part of its demands by 1906. Elections were held and the first Majlis or National Assembly met in October of that year and drafted the Constitution, which received the Shah's signature on the 1st January, 1907.

The Shah from whom these reforms had been wrung died a few days later. His successor, Muhammed Ali Shah, at once devoted himself to combatting the constitutional movement and destroying the Constitution imposed on his predecessor.

At this point it becomes necessary to glance at the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, concluded a few months after Muhammed Ali Shah ascended the throne, for it greatly influenced the course of events in Persia up to the end of the war in 1918.

For many years Persia had come within that sphere in Asia in which British and Russian interests were in opposition. In the kingdom of the Shahs Russia saw the ultimate possibility of reaching, on the Persian Gulf, the warm water coastline that had so long been one of her national aims. From the days of Peter the Great onwards, she had regarded Persia as an easy field for successful aggression. Under the treaties of Gulistan, in 1813, and Turkmanchai, in 1828, she had forced the Shah to cede to her in perpetuity eleven of his valuable northern provinces, as well as compelling his acceptance of the condition that no Persian war vessel should ever be maintained on the Caspian. Between 1828 and 1907 Russia's southward advance in Persia had been interrupted. But from about 1840 she had pressed her conquests in Central Asia, and by 1885 had established a common frontier with Afghanistan. The "threat to India" so set up forced upon Great Britain an attitude of watchful precaution, determined the relations between the two Powers and profoundly affected the course of British foreign policy.

After the Russo-Japanese war of 1904 it became evident that Russia was once more turning her attention to Persia. But now other high considerations of policy intervened. The increase of German population, wealth and power in the last quarter of the 19th century was creating a danger in Central Europe to which France and Russia had long been alive, and against which they had allied themselves in 1892. From the time of the South African war (1899-1902) onwards, the growing ambitions of Germany were directed to courses that, if continued, would challenge



the whole position of Great Britain as a World Power and inevitably lead to war. In 1904 Great Britain and France composed their main differences and established the *Entente*. Thereupon an extension of the *Entente* to include Russia, for which the French were exceedingly anxious, came into view.

The chief manifestation of German policy directly affecting Anglo-Russian relations was the thrust from Central Europe towards the Balkans and the East, and the attempt to dominate the Ottoman Empire, economically and politically, in order to establish a German corridor to the Persian Gulf. If carried to success this policy would, to mention nothing more, exclude Russia from Constantinople and the Straits, the Mediterranean, and the Persian Gulf. Even as a possibility this was unacceptable to the Tsar's Government. The aims of German policy in the Middle East endangered vital Russian interests no less than vital interests of Great Britain.

It was foreseen in St. Petersburg that when the conflict did come the Ottoman Empire would almost certainly be found on the side of Germany, and that if the alliance were overthrown by a Triple *Entente*, Russian prospects of acquiring Constantinople and the Straits and a Mediterranean access would be excellent. But a settlement of the wide issues between Russia and Great Britain in Asia was necessary before the Triple *Entente* could come into being.

The Anglo-Russian Convention signed on the 31st August, 1907, provided this settlement, and marked the creation of the Triple *Entente*. The convention defined the interests of the two Powers respectively in Tibet, Afghanistan and Persia, and thus, for Great Britain, dealt with the whole northern and western approaches to India. The only part of the convention requiring notice here is that affecting Persia.

For Anglo-Russian purposes Persia was divided into three roughly parallel spheres running east and west. The northern sphere, extending from the Afghan to the Turkish frontier, and including Isfahan, Yezd and Khakh, and all the Persian coastline of the Caspian Sea, was assigned to Russia as an area in which Great Britain recognised the predominance of Russian interests. The small south-eastern sphere, with a northern boundary beginning at Gazik, on the Afghan frontier, and passing thence to Bandar Abbas, on the Persian Gulf, was similarly assigned to Great Britain. Between these two areas, and completely separating them, lay the neutral sphere, a broad belt of territory stretching from Afghanistan to Turkey and embracing the Persian part of the coastline of the Gulf westward of Bandar Abbas. The contracting parties undertook to refrain from seeking political or economic concessions in each other's sphere; the neutral area was to be open to the activities of both.

Such in briefest outline were the provisions and aims of the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907, an instrument destined to be of only slight practical* utility in the regions to which it applied, though of tremendous importance in world history. Its vital work was accomplished when its ratifications were exchanged in September 1907, and Russia and Great Britain were enabled to combine against the German danger.

In consequence of her long-standing opposition to Russian aggression in Asia, Great Britain enjoyed a greater measure of confidence and goodwill in Persia than any other Great Power. In the struggle between the Constitutionalists and the Crown, it was supposed that the sympathies of His Majesty's Government were with the former. The fact that in the great *bast* of 1906 some 15,000 Constitutionalists took refuge in the grounds of the British Legation at Tehran, with the approval of the British Minister, had confirmed this idea and greatly enhanced British popularity.

When, therefore, at the beginning of September 1907 the terms of the Anglo-Russian Convention became known in Persia, they created general astonishment and consternation. The conclusion of the convention was regarded as the first step towards Anglo-Russian intervention, with the partition of Persia as the ultimate purpose. The British Minister at Tehran endeavoured to allay popular apprehension in a memorandum he sent to the Persian Foreign Minister on the 5th September, in which he declared that reports of impending intervention and partition were entirely baseless, and that the object of the agreement was "not to attack but rather to assure for ever the independence of Persia." These assurances were reinforced by a joint note addressed by the British and Russian representatives at Tehran to the

* The clauses relating to Afghanistan never came into force, as the necessary consent to them by the Amir was never received. The convention itself was declared null and void for ever by the Russian Bolshevik Government in January 1918; was described by Lord Curzon, speaking for His Majesty's Government, on the 21st January, 1918, as "indefinitely suspended," and was denounced by the Persian Government in May of the same year.



Persian Foreign Minister on the 11th September. The note explained that the convention was in no way directed against "the fundamental principle of absolute respect of the integrity and independence of Persia," and that its purpose was no more than to avoid "any cause of misunderstanding between the contracting parties on the ground of Persian affairs." These explanations had little effect. Russian policy in Persia had long been recognised as one of covert aggression; in consequence of the agreement with Russia, Great Britain, too, became deeply suspect, and lost the confidence and admiration with which hitherto she had been regarded.

Indeed, Russia soon provided Persians with good cause for the conviction that the agreement boded ill for their country. From the outset it appeared that Russian representatives and officers in Persia, if not, indeed, the Russian Government themselves, regarded the agreement as an instrument intended to prepare the way for eventual annexation by Russia of the northern and perhaps also the neutral zone. They believed that the Persian Nationalist movement, unless overthrown, would provide the chief obstacle to the accomplishment of this end.

In his struggle against the Nationalists, the new Sovereign, Mahommed Ali Shah, therefore found no difficulty in using the Persian Cossack Brigade, commanded by the Russian Colonel Liakhoff. On the 23rd June, 1908, Colonel Liakhoff, acting, it would seem, under instructions from the Viceroy of the Caucasus, assisted the Shah in a *coup d'Etat* by bombarding the Majlis and killing or imprisoning the Deputies. The Shah was thus enabled to abolish the Constitution and establish his own absolute rule.

The Nationalists retaliated by organising their provincial forces and recapturing Tehran on the 14th July, 1909, after six days of fighting. Mahommed Ali Shah was taken prisoner and compelled to abdicate in favour of his young son (under a Regent) on the 16th July; the Constitution was restored, and the second Majlis assembled on the 15th November of the same year.

Meanwhile the Russian Government were adjusting their policy to meet the new situation created by the Nationalists' armed resistance to the Shah. They marched troops into Persian territory and occupied Tabriz, the capital of North-West Persia, Enzeli, on the Persian littoral of the Caspian, Kazvin, on the way from Enzeli to Tehran, and Meshed, in North-East Persia, and began to construct an extension of the Caucasian Railway system to Julfa, on the frontier over against Tabriz.

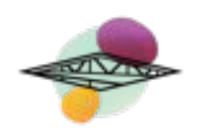
From the close of 1909 to the outbreak of war between the *Entente* Powers and Turkey in 1914, Persian history presents a welter of events that needs little notice here. The internal difficulties of the Government were great. They included intrigues, raids and rebellion on behalf of the deposed Shah, supported by Russia. Financial embarrassment was extreme and recourse to loans absolutely necessary; yet loans could not be raised owing to Russian action intended to compel Persia to borrow from Russia in return for concessions that would still further strengthen the Russian hold on the country. Inflaming all difficulties was the aggressive spirit of Russian policy which sought every opportunity of embarrassing the Government and undermining the integrity and independence of Persia.

If the country was to be extricated from the confusion in which it struggled, financial and administrative reform must in some way be effected. Order must be maintained and the revenues collected and made available for the needs of the State. It became evident to the Government that the necessary reforms could only be carried through under disinterested and competent foreign advisers and administrators; that an efficient gendarmerie would be required, and that the force must have foreign officers.

In January 1911 the United States agreed to lend financial advisers; and military officers for the gendarmerie were provided from Sweden.

Mr. Morgan Schuster, the chief of the American mission, arrived in Persia in May 1911. He soon asked to be invested with extraordinary powers, without which he found he could achieve nothing; and these powers were unanimously conferred by the Majlis on the 13th June, 1911.

The Russian Government were strongly opposed to the whole project of Persian reform, as striking at the roots of their policy. They desired a disintegrating and enfeebled Persia; they recognised that the American mission, with the aid of the gendarmerie—which Mr. Schuster proposed to place under the command of Captain C. B. Stokes, a British officer with Indian and Persian experience—were likely, if allowed time and opportunity, to extricate Persia from her financial difficulties. A solvent Nationalist Persia would, in fact, be disastrous for Russian aims. Strenuous efforts were therefore made to thwart the Schuster mission and get it out of the country. In October 1911 Russia finally forbade the appointment of Captain Stokes,



"ملخص تاريخي للأحداث في أراضي الإمبراطورية العثمانية، فارس وشبه الجزيرة العربية التي تؤثر على الموقف البريطاني في الخليج الفارسي، ١٩٠٧-١٩٢٨" [٧و] (٢٠/١٨٨)

and His Majesty's Government, from motives of higher policy, ordered him to leave Persia and return to India. At Russian instigation the Swedish Government detained a number of their officers who had been promised for the Persian gendarmerie. Meanwhile, Russia greatly increased her garrisons in northern Persia. Persian resentment mounted rapidly, both against Russia and Great Britain, and His Majesty's Government, in October 1911, deemed it necessary to reinforce the British consular guards in Fars and Isfahan by an Indian cavalry regiment.

On the 25th November a Russian ultimatum was presented to the Persian Government demanding the dismissal of Mr. Schuster, a pledge to engage no more foreign officials without Russian or British consent and payment of the cost of Russian troops sent to Enzeli in support of the ultimatum. The ultimatum was rejected by the Majlis, whereupon Russian troops began to move on Tehran. Fighting between Russians and Persians broke out at Tabriz, Enzeli and Resht; and on the 23rd December the Regent and the Cabinet dissolved the Majlis by force, dismissed the Schuster mission and accepted the other Russian demands.

In this way ended a promising attempt to reorganise Persian Treasury administration and establish the country's finances on a sure basis. It failed because, in the widest view, Persia stood in the path of tremendous exterior national movements seeking equilibrium, movements to which she could offer no adequate native resistance. In a view less wide, yet containing much truth, the attempt failed because Mr. Schuster saw the problems he set out to solve only as far as they were contained within the frontiers of Persia. He regarded traditional Russian aims, and the interests which, rightly or wrongly, Russia had established in Persia, as abuses injurious to Persia and jeopardising the success of his mission and, therefore, to be swept away or uncompromisingly opposed. In a lesser degree he held similar ideas of British policy and interests. If any action he thought necessary to take cut across Russian or British policy and interests, so much the worse for the policy or interests. Nor could he ever properly appreciate the fact that wider considerations of Anglo-Franco-Russian relations precluded His Majesty's Government from decisively and successfully opposing Russian encroachments in Persia. Even less could he understand that Russia would not change her policy nor allow her interests to be diminished or endangered except under compulsion; and that as compulsion was out of the question he must adjust his actions to his means.

Russia now completely dominated the five northern provinces and Isfahan, and usurped much of the administration and a large part of the revenues. She took severe reprisals against those Nationalists who had opposed her in Tabriz and elsewhere in 1911, and executed and imprisoned many. She also continued to support the ex-Shah. In March 1912, after a rebellion fomented in Khorasan by the ex-Shah had encountered popular resistance at Meshed, Russian troops bombarded the shrine at that place, the most sacred shrine in Persia, and killed many unoffending citizens.

The Government of Persia at this time was carried on by the Regent and a succession of rapidly changing Cabinets, for none could be formed acceptable both to Russia and to Persians; and it was still necessary for the Majlis to remain suspended.

British interests in Persia, not only political but economic, were great and increasing, especially in the south-western portion of the neutral sphere, and at many points were in conflict with those of Russia. These differences brought M. Sazonoff, the Russian Foreign Minister, to England for two weeks in September-October 1912, when he discussed Persian questions with His Majesty's Government. In 1912, too, the project of the Trans-Persian Railway, on which the two Governments differed, attracted no little attention. The rapid development of the oil-field, 130 miles north-east of Mohammerah, by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, conferred on this region an importance to Great Britain unforeseen at the time the Anglo-Russian Convention was being negotiated. The field had since been proved to contain one of the great oil deposits of the world, and its output was steadily and continuously rising. Furthermore, it had become, in a special and peculiar sense, a British national interest. Anxious to secure a source of oil supply for the Admiralty that should be under British control, His Majesty's Government had financed the company, and thereby acquired a great political and proprietary stake in this part of Persia. However anxious His Majesty's Government might be not to undertake new and dangerous responsibilities, it was impossible for them to follow a policy of detachment in Persia.

The fact could not be overlooked that alike in spirit and deed, Russia was grossly infringing the Anglo-Russian Convention. Russian action, too, had caused Persian hatred to be directed not only against Russia and Russians, but almost



equally against Great Britain and her nationals. This and the disturbed condition of the country had seriously militated against British trade, which was still further prejudiced by the hostile attitude of Russian officials, who lost no opportunity of placing obstacles in its way. Various protests and remonstrances made by His Majesty's Government to St. Petersburg produced little effect.

In May 1914 there were signs that unless Russian policy and action in Persia underwent a change, British public opinion would presently be demanding revision of the convention. In the following June, Sir E. Grey handed the Russian Ambassador a vigorous protest against the action of Russian officials in North-West Persia. The protest was supported by the French Government, who caused representations to be made in St. Petersburg. The Tsar and his Foreign Minister thereupon declared themselves resolved that Persian questions should not be allowed to prejudice the maintenance of good relations between Great Britain and Russia.

But no change of spirit on the part of Russian officials concerned became apparent; and on the 3rd August, 1914, in a despatch to the Foreign Office, Sir W. Townley, the British Minister at Tehran, suggested that the convention should be abrogated. He argued that experience had demonstrated that the British hope and expectation of creating a Persia strong enough to act as a buffer State between Great Britain and Russia could not be realised under the convention. Half the country was already directly under Russian influence; a portion was undecided; and the insignificant remainder was regarded by Tehran as owning British allegiance. Meanwhile, the Central Government had no authority, and could have none while hampered by the need of considering the wishes of one Power or the other, or of both.

But by this time matters of greater importance had thrust the convention and British and Russian differences regarding it into the background. That instrument had, in fact, already performed the part it had been destined to fill. The war for which, in the deepest sense, it had been a measure of preparation had now involved the Powers of the Triple *Entente*. And although in theory the actual covenants of the convention were not invalidated, yet in practice they did not survive the rough adjustments that the war eventually applied to the aims and ambitions of the belligerent Powers.

Though taking no national part in the struggle, Persia now underwent the sufferings and humiliations inseparable from a war conducted on Persian soil by the forces of warring foreign Powers. Turkish and Russian armies contended for possession of her provinces. German agents endeavoured to inflame her people against the enemies of Germany, and to use her territory for movements directed against British India. And Great Britain, to safeguard her vital supply of Persian oil, first sent an expedition to Lower Mesopotamia, and then found it necessary to introduce British troops into neutral Persia to oppose German and Turkish designs.

Chapter (3).—Arabia (Nejd, 1891-1914).

It has been seen that in Turkey and Persia the strivings of a newly-found nationalism played an important part in shaping the course of events during the seven or eight years immediately preceding the war. In Arabia, or the part of Arabia with which we are chiefly concerned, this potent influence was absent. Instead were the rivalry of the two leading ruling families; the emergence from one of these families of a leader called, with some reason, the greatest Arab ruler since Mahomet; and a Wahabi revival of militant religious zeal, astutely fostered and used by this ruler to prosecute his far-reaching political ambitions.

As the history of the Persian Gulf during the last 120 years shows, communities living on the Arabian littoral of the Gulf have, from time to time, been liable to the impact of militant Wahabism coming from the Emirate of Nejd in Central Arabia.

This creed or teaching had its origin in Nejd in the middle of the 18th century, and ever since has received the fanatical support of the inhabitants of that region. In theory and practice it stands for the simplest and earliest form of the Mahometan religion. But it also calls for the reform of Islam by a return to the severe austerities of conduct and faith as taught by Mahomet, and regards those who reject its teachings as worse than infidels. It has always sought to impose its reforms by the choice between acceptance and practice of its creed or the sword.

Although at first a spiritual force, directed to spiritual ends, Wahabism was soon made to subserve the political and personal aims of the Emirs of Nejd. Indeed,



the fact may be noted that the chief periods of Wahabi external aggression have coincided with the rule of great Emirs ambitious of political power and all the secular rewards of conquest.

In 1891 Abdur Rahman-bin-Saud, Emir of Nejd, was overthrown in battle by Mohammed-bin-Rashid, Emir of Jebel Shammar, one of the greatest of Arabian conquerors, who added the Wahabi territory to his already wide domains. The dispossessed Emir and his family eventually found refuge with the Sheikh of Koweit.

Mohammed-bin-Rashid, conqueror of Nejd, died in 1897. Three years later, Riyadh, the capital of Nejd, was recaptured by a sudden Wahabi attack. This bold stroke was the work of Abdul Aziz-bin-Saud, a youth of 20, son of the fugitive Emir at Koweit. Henceforward it will be convenient to speak of the son as Ibn Saud and the father as Abdur Rahman, though he did not resign the Emirship till about 1910. This young Ibn Saud was the future Sultan of Nejd and King of Hejaz, who at present rules the greater part of Arabia.

Between 1902 and 1908 Ibn Saud recovered nearly all the territory included in the Nejd of twenty years earlier. During these six years of intermittent hostilities, including Turkish intervention against the Wahabi State, Ibn Saud and his father felt the need of obtaining foreign support. In 1902 Abdur Rahman approached the British Resident in the Persian Gulf with the request that he might be regarded "as one having relations with the British Government," and stated that he had already rejected Russian overtures because he wished his relations to be with Great Britain. The Resident did not reply to the letter; his action was approved by the Government of India, and he was instructed not to encourage the Wahabi Emir.

Perhaps in consequence of this rebuff the next Russian advances were more favourably received by the Emir. A meeting between his son Ibn Saud and the Russian consul-general at Bushire took place at Koweit in March 1903. It is understood that at their interview Russian support in arms and money was offered. This particular manifestation of Russian policy in the Gulf would seem to have been caused by an appeal by Ibn Rashid to the Porte in 1902 for aid to quell Ibn Saud's "revolt." At the same time, he had represented that Great Britain intended to establish close relations with the Wahabi State.

In January 1904 Ibn Rashid renewed his request for help, and now definitely offered to place himself under Turkish sovereignty and orders. Thus came about the Turkish occupation of Qasim, a region between Jebel Shammar and Nejd, and claimed by both. A Turkish expedition was sent from Mesopotamia in May 1904; it reached Qasim in July. By the beginning of October it had been almost entirely destroyed by the Wahabis and their allies.

When His Majesty's Government found that the Turks were about to give Ibn Rashid military aid they recognised that, being deeply interested in the maintenance of the *status quo* at Koweit, they could not remain indifferent. Sheikh Mubarak, of that place, was in alliance with the Emir of Nejd; Turkish help to Ibn Rashid might lead to the sheikh supporting his ally, and thus jeopardising the *status quo*. Discussion between the British and Indian Governments showed that the latter feared the absorption of Nejd by Turkey more than a Wahabi domination of Central Arabia. Remonstrances were therefore made at Constantinople, but all without effect, and the Turkish force began its march. Meanwhile the Emir of Nejd, alarmed at the prospect of Turkish intervention, had again applied to the Resident in the Persian Gulf for British protection. Again, however, no answer was vouchsafed him.

Early in 1904 the question of sending a British officer to the capital of Nejd was mooted by the Government of India. But His Majesty's Government, having apprehensions, decided that without their sanction no steps should be taken to enter into relations with Nejd or to send an agent there.

After defeating the Turkish expedition, the Wahabi Emir seems to have become disturbed at his own success. It is reported that about the middle of October 1904 he wrote to the Vali of Basra, endeavoured to explain away the attack on an Ottoman force, and requested that his submission should be accepted. His explanations were well received at Constantinople, but preparations were continued in Mesopotamia for sending another expedition to Central Arabia.

This force marched out of Nejef at the end of January 1905; it was known by this time, however, that its destination was Qasim and its mission pacific. It was met at the Turkish frontier by the Wahabi Emir and the Sheikh of Koweit. In the discussions that followed between them and the Turkish Vali an arrangement was reached in the middle of February by which the Emir was to be appointed Kaimakam



or Governor of Nejd under Turkey, Ibn Rashid restrained from interference in Nejd, and Turkish officials and military garrisons established throughout Qasim. The pacific occupation of Qasim so arranged was duly effected and the Sultan's name used in public prayers.

Notwithstanding the presence of Turkish garrisons in Qasim, hostilities were resumed between Nejd and Jebel Shammar at the end of 1905. In April 1906 Ibn Saud surprised and routed the Shammar force and killed Ibn Rashid. In the elation of this success the Wahabi Emir proclaimed himself "Ruler of Sharq," a term by which he is supposed to have designated the whole of Eastern Arabia. Peace was declared between Jebel Shammar and Nejd in July 1906.

At the end of 1906 the Turkish garrisons in Qasim, always in difficulties with the people and with Ibn Saud, were withdrawn to Hejaz, and the occupation ended with a great loss of Ottoman prestige in Arabia, the increase of Ibn Saud's, and the inclusion of Qasim in the territory of Nejd.

During 1906 Abdur Rahman and his son made repeated, but unsuccessful, efforts through the Sheikh of Koweit and others to open negotiations for the support of the British Government. In one of these approaches an agent of Ibn Saud's informed the British Political Agency at Bahrein that the Wahabi leader intended the capture of Hasa, on the Persian Gulf (a province of Nejd, held by the Turks since 1875), but that before attempting it he wished to be assured of British protection by sea. In return, he would bind himself by agreements to the British Government similar to those of Trucial Oman. In May 1907 His Majesty's Government directed that Ibn Saud's agent should be informed that, as the proposal involved matters which could not possibly be entertained, no reply should be expected.

Ibn Saud now turned his attention to improving and exploiting the political and military resources available in Nejd. The chief of these was Wahabism and the innate tendency of the population to react to the teachings of the creed. He saw that Wahabism could be fanned into activity; could be organised—as had never so far been done—and be made submissive to his personal and absolute control. In this way he would create an invaluable force for attaining his political and military ambitions. These schemes, however, required time for their execution; and between 1908 and 1914 Ibn Saud was chiefly occupied with internal organisation of the kind indicated.

In 1910 he called into existence the society known as the Akhwan (or Brotherhood). It professed the strictest interpretations of the Wahabi creed; was organised and armed as a military force that could be mobilised at the shortest notice; and was pledged to absolute obedience to Ibn Saud as head of the Brotherhood. This revival of Wahabism in its extremist form flourished and spread amazingly. In the training centre established at Riyadh some 300 selected members of the Brotherhood were always under instruction as the preachers and agents of Akhwanism, to be sent thence when trained wherever their master required. At Riyadh, too, was an organisation by which the order to mobilise could be conveyed to every part of Nejd territory within 48 hours.

This period of preparation by Ibn Saud witnessed also the chief activities of His Majesty's Government in consolidating and safeguarding the British position in the Persian Gulf by the negotiation of conventions with Turkey and Germany. The Anglo-Turkish Convention, initialled in May 1913, recognised the Sheikhdom of Koweit as an Ottoman kaza, but defined and confirmed its autonomous status and excluded Turkish interference. The same convention also dealt with matters touching the interests of Ibn Saud. It recognised Hasa—the province on the Persian Gulf that had been in Turkish occupation since 1871—as an Ottoman sanjak of Nejd, and thus implied recognition of Ottoman sovereignty over Nejd itself.

At the end of 1913 Ibn Saud felt himself strong enough to attempt the recovery of Hasa—the project for which he had sought British support seven years earlier. By May 1914, he had expelled the Turkish garrison, regained the province, and with it a coast line on the Persian Gulf of some 250 miles between Koweit and the Peninsula of El Katr. He had thus brought himself into direct contact with British interests and was no longer a ruler whom His Majesty's Government could ignore.

At this time the Turkish Government were in no position to take active measures against Ibn Saud's aggression. As a face-saving alternative they condoned his offence and offered to appoint him Vali of Nejd; and this nominal position he accepted, regarding the title as meaningless except as carrying with it a more easy settlement of the issue than he had ever hoped to obtain.

The World War was now in sight and Ibn Saud had to decide how it would affect him, and what course he should pursue for his own advantage.



(9)

PART II.—THE WAR (1914-19).

Chapter (4).—The Ottoman Empire (1914-19).

In this Part no attempt has been made to follow as a whole or in detail the course of military operations in the Middle East during the years of war. To have done so would be outside the scope of this paper. What has been attempted is a broad consecutive outline of such political and military events as were an expression of policy, on the part of the enemies of Great Britain, of Great Britain herself, or of her Allies, that bore more or less directly upon British interests in the Persian Gulf. Even with these limitations the subject is a large one.

On the 31st October, 1914, the day after the *Entente* Powers had broken off relations with Turkey, the Committee of Union and Progress sent a circular letter to all its sections throughout the Empire. This letter explained that, in deciding to participate in the World War, Turkey was moved by two chief considerations. She sought to defend herself against the traditional Russian purpose of destroying the Empire and taking possession of Constantinople and the Straits. And she sought the realisation of something "far nearer to our hearts"—the "vindication of our national ideal . . . in order to obtain thereby a national frontier to our Empire, which should include and unite all branches of our race." In putting forward these motives there can be no doubt the Committee of Union and Progress fastened on them as making the strongest appeal to the country.

On the 6th November, 1914, a week after the beginning of hostilities with Turkey, a British expeditionary force from India landed at Fao, in Mesopotamia, for the protection of the oil supply from Persia. On the 22nd November this force occupied Basra.

On the 14th November the Turkish Sultan-Caliph proclaimed jehad against all Powers making war upon Turkey or her allies. Much was expected from the playing of this trump, but the results were disappointing. It will be necessary to say more on this subject when writing of events of the war in Arabia.

In prosecution of the war against Russia and at the same time of pan-Turkish aims, the chief Turkish military effort was directed to the Transcaucasian front. The presence of the "Goeben" secured the line of sea communications to Trebizond and enabled troops to be conveyed by water. Nevertheless, it was found impossible to begin these ambitious operations before the middle of December—two weeks later than had been intended, and therefore in danger of winter snow. They were a boldly conceived and conducted attempt to envelop and destroy the opposing Russian forces by a wide encircling movement, and as a result to secure immediate occupation of the lost districts of Kars and Ardahan. Many German officers were employed, and Enver Pasha himself was present. But exceptionally heavy snow arrived and delayed the enveloping troops that were to come in on the Russian rear by Ardahan from Trebizond. During ten days of severe fighting the Russians were able to deal with the widely separated Turkish forces in detail; and by the first week in January 1915 a Turkish army of 150,000 men had ceased to exist as a military organisation. It had, however, been touch and go at the crisis of the struggle. Enver Pasha and the pan-Turks never came so near to achieving a great and resounding triumph as they did during the last few days of December 1914. Nor was the pan-Turkish cause ever able to overtake the disastrous effects of these early battles around Sarikamish.

Meanwhile Turkish troops had advanced into Persian Azerbaijan in attempted realisation of pan-Turkish aims. And although this movement was defeated by the Russians, yet the Turks were able to prevent a Russian occupation of territory around Lake Van that would have prevented Turkish access to North-Western Persia.

A dissipation of Turkish strength in Persia and North-Eastern Asia Minor was opposed to German ideas of what the interests of the alliance required. German military policy called for an advance through Syria on Egypt. That was the quarter in which Turkish military effort could produce the most valuable results—risings against the British, interruption of the Canal, the locking-up of British troops on a large scale. The restoration of Ottoman sovereignty in North-East Africa was speciously advanced as the obvious reward of Turkish success in Egypt.

But conquest in this direction had no attraction for the pan-Turks. They recognised the extreme military difficulties that would attend it. Nor had they any



mind to renew earlier Turkish responsibilities in Africa. They already believed that the Arab portions of the Empire were an unfortunate encumbrance, and that African in addition would be fatal. Whatever the public professions of those who controlled Turkish military policy, they regarded serious operations against Egypt as a dissipation of strength not to be permitted. They recognised, however, that demonstrations in force on this front would be of advantage to themselves and their allies.

Preparations for an offensive against the canal had been begun before the actual outbreak of war, and an army of 25,000 men began its advance at the end of January 1915. It reached the canal zone on the 2nd February. Three days later it had been repulsed, and, as its commander, Jemal Pasha, has recorded, was retreating in order to avoid complete destruction, and that it might be put "to the best uses till the end of the war."

The Russian Government now presented the long-term bill drawn in their favour by the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907. On the 4th March, 1915, after His Majesty's Government had decided to send a military expedition to the Dardanelles and rapid success was expected, the Russian Government put in a formal claim that their allies should recognise Russia's right to possession of Constantinople and the Straits. The claim was accepted by His Majesty's Government on the 12th March and by the French Government on the 12th April. But His Majesty's Government made the reservation that their consent was "subject to the war being prosecuted to a successful conclusion, and to Great Britain and France realising their desiderata in the Ottoman Empire and elsewhere." From this reservation sprang the Sykes-Picot Agreement of May 1916, which assigned Bagdad and Southern Mesopotamia to Great Britain.

From March 1915 onward to the end of September the defence of the Dardanelles absorbed all possible Turkish resources. Though successful, this desperate struggle for existence, which consumed the greater part of her old regular army, left Turkey exhausted and unable to exploit to full advantage the entirely unexpected opportunity for conquest in the east that presented itself two years later. Furthermore, after the success on the Straits, Germany contrived that considerable Turkish forces should be diverted to the Balkan and Galician theatres of war.

In May 1915, and throughout the course of the Gallipoli campaign, the Turkish Government began and carried out the deportation and massacre of Armenians, especially those of the eastern vilayets. There are good reasons for believing that, although attributed to military necessity, this general uprooting of the race was adopted and executed in furtherance of the Pan-Turkish ideal of a purely Turkish Anatolia having uninterrupted racial continuity into Northern Persia, and that, looking to the Turkish future, it was desired to effect the clearance before the Allies could intervene, if they reached Constantinople, as at one time it was feared they would.

During the Gallipoli campaign the Turks had managed to continue a strenuous defence of the Lake Van region. Even while the issue on the Straits hung in the balance they had reinforced their troops on this front and expelled the Russians from Van on the 5th August.

Mesopotamia now became a theatre of war that made insistent and ever-increasing demands on Turkish resources. Here German interests and prestige were also at stake. Bagdad was a great attraction to the British Expeditionary Force in Lower Mesopotamia. It was an important Ottoman city renowned throughout the East, and inseparably connected with all those German ambitions embodied in the Bagdad Railway. It controlled all the chief routes from Ottoman territory into Western Persia. If in British hands it would be a valuable asset when the time came for making peace and for the redrawing of frontiers. Obviously the capture and occupation of Bagdad would have considerable political and military advantages.

The first British advance on Bagdad began on the 11th November, 1915. Both German and Turkish interests were endangered, not the least among them control of the great routes into Western Persia; and heavy Turkish reinforcements, released by success on the Dardanelles, were directed to Mesopotamia. The hard-won victory of the 25th November at Ctesiphon, within sight of Bagdad, enabled the British army to retire to Kut-el-Amara, but plainly showed that the Expeditionary Force was inadequate for the capture of Bagdad under the conditions that now existed.

The siege of Kut-el-Amara continued from the 7th December, 1915, to the 29th April, 1916, when the British force capitulated. With this remorseless entanglement on their hands, Mesopotamia was, for His Majesty's Government, a sphere of war that could not be ignored or kept within the narrow limits of the Tigris



delta. And after Kut-el-Amara had fallen, exacting considerations of British prestige in the East and serious and increasing Turco-German efforts from Bagdad against Persia, and through Persia towards India, all combined to make the capture of Bagdad more than ever worth a great British military effort. The Gallipoli campaign, the thrust at the heart of the Ottoman Empire, having failed, Mesopotamia now, in fact, became the battleground where the conflicting eastern interests and aims of the belligerent Powers were brought to a settlement. On the one hand were at stake, for Turkey, her sovereignty in Iraq and Pan-Turkish hopes of expansion at the expense of Persia; and, for Germany, the whole great edifice of ambition and domination reared upon the Bagdad Railway, together with immediate opportunity for creating serious difficulties for Great Britain in Persia and India. On the other hand, for Great Britain, were her prestige in the East and in Islam; her position in the Persian Gulf; and ultimately the security of India.

While the British were being besieged in Kut-el-Amara the Russians struck yet another blow against the designs of the Pan-Turks. A great Russian offensive on the Caucasian front was expected for the spring of 1916; it began instead in the depth of winter, before the considerable Turkish reinforcements released from Gallipoli had yet arrived. On the 12th February, 1916, the Russians were assaulting the outer defences of Erzerum; four days later they had gained possession of the fortress, the headquarters of the Turkish eastern army. Meanwhile, another offensive, on the southern sector of the same front, carried Russian arms to Bitlis and Mush, west of Lake Van. In the north the westward advance continued till August 1916, when the Russian front reached a north to south line passing a hundred miles west of Erzerum. But in the region of Lake Van, where Turkish territory marched with Persian, they were less successful. For though after having been ejected from Bitlis and Mush they had recovered these positions in August, and at Bitlis were only 150 miles from the Bagdad Railway—the Turkish line of communication with Mesopotamia and Western Persia—Turkish resistance had hardened and rendered further progress impracticable.

After the fall of Kut-el-Amara at the end of April 1916, Bagdad seemed safe, and German and Turkish prospects in Mesopotamia and Persia correspondingly bright. Impelled by their obsession for expansion in Persia, and against German advice, the Turks in June began an offensive in Western Persia, where for some months they had maintained forces opposing the Russians. By the middle of August they had reached Hamadan, expelled the Russians, and now had some 30,000 square miles of Persian territory more or less under their occupation.

On the 16th May, 1916, the so-called Sykes-Picot Agreement was concluded between Great Britain and France, with Russia as a consenting party. It embodied a settlement of the desiderata of the contracting Powers in Turkey-in-Asia. It calls for mention here because it assigned to Great Britain, as her sphere of interest, a broad belt of territory extending from the Persian Gulf and the Persian frontier to the Mediterranean, including Basra and Bagdad.

While Turkish hopes in Mesopotamia and Persia ran high, the Sherif of Mecca, on the 5th June, 1916, began his revolt against the Ottoman Government. At first, chiefly spiritual and political in effect, it became of considerable military importance; and its later political results were such that in the regions between Persia and Egypt they influence British policy to the present day.

The period of respite the Turks enjoyed in Mesopotamia after the fall of Kut-el-Amara in April 1916, which they utilised for an offensive in Persia, ended in January 1917. British preparations were then complete, and another advance on Bagdad began on the 2nd of that month. The battle of Kut-el-Amara opened on the 9th January; after prolonged fighting the town was reoccupied on the 23rd February; and Bagdad fell on the 11th March. In consequence of these successes the position of the Turks in Western Persia was progressively endangered. They withdrew their forces; and by the end of March the Russians had recovered Persian territory almost up to the frontier of Mesopotamia. Turkish troops around Lake Urmia in North-Western Persia remained unaffected, being served by other lines of communication. Indeed, on the bitterly contested southern sector of the Caucasian front, now held by the IInd Army under Mustafa Kemal Pasha, they had, by the end of May 1917, turned the Russians out of the Bitlis and Mush districts and removed the threat to Turkish lines of communication with Mesopotamia and North-Western Persia.

By the summer of 1917 a new and incalculable factor had begun to make its influence felt to the benefit of pan-Turkish political and military aims. Outwardly and visibly the Russian revolution began on the 12th March, 1917. On the



16th March the Tsar abdicated; three days later the Grand Duke Nicholas, Commander-in-chief in the Caucasus, was decoyed away from his command, arrested, and sent to exile in the Crimea. And on the 9th April the Russian Government issued its proclamation calling for the self-determination of peoples and a durable peace. After the removal of the Grand Duke, divided control, paralysis, and disintegration attended the Russian army in the Caucasus, which soon ceased to be of any active danger to the Turks. Nor were signs wanting that before long Russian domination would be challenged by the Caucasian peoples themselves. Pan-Turkish eastern ambitions, which had seemed unrealisable after the Russian capture of Erzerum, were now provided with a new, unexpected and increasing opportunity for their execution.

From the end of May 1917, therefore, Turkey was opposed by British armies alone—on the Mesopotamian front and the Palestine front. Egypt as a goal of Turkish military effort had been abandoned after the failure at Romani in August 1916; and since the end of 1916 the British had established themselves in Southern Palestine. Following British defeats at Gaza in March and April 1917, General Sir E. Allenby had been appointed Commander-in-chief of the Expeditionary Force in June; and with this change the Palestine front, where British preparations for a great offensive were being made, became for Turkey a front of the most dangerous possibilities.

In deciding Turkish military policy in the summer of 1917, Enver Pasha developed a passion for the recovery of Bagdad. It was a project in which his own and pan-Turkish ambitions in Western Persia, and the German hope of preserving the cherished scheme of access to the Persian Gulf, all pulled strongly in the same direction. Notwithstanding opposition from those who saw a storm about to break in Palestine, and others who wished more attention to be given to Transcaucasia, Enver Pasha decided on an offensive against Bagdad. The Palestine front was strong enough for defence; the Russians in Caucasia could be left for the time being to the demoralising influences at work upon them. To the prejudice of other fronts preparations were begun for the assembling of the Yilderim army group, to be launched against Bagdad, and General von Falkenhayn was lent by Germany to conduct the campaign.

When von Falkenhayn had examined the situation more closely he, too, found the threat from Palestine alarming. He agreed that the Bagdad offensive could not be undertaken till the British had been driven back to the Suez Canal. He professed to see how this could be done. At the beginning of September Enver Pasha was converted to von Falkenhayn's view; decided on an offensive in Palestine before attempting the recovery of Bagdad; and appointed the German to the command.

But von Falkenhayn was given no opportunity for executing his plans. The British advance began at the end of October, and on the 11th December General Allenby entered Jerusalem. During the summer and autumn of 1917 the British army in Mesopotamia, likewise, advanced northward and westward of Bagdad and established itself more firmly in the country than ever.

The rapid conquest of Southern Palestine up to Jerusalem entirely destroyed Turco-German plans for ambitious offensives, either in Palestine or Mesopotamia; it also went far towards destroying those German and pan-Turkish hopes which centred in Bagdad. Henceforward, Turkish armies on these fronts, instead of regaining territory, could hope to do no more than maintain a harassed defensive on dwindling resources. Germany began to make plans for obtaining an alternative route to the East by the Black Sea, Transcaucasia and the Caspian, this possibility having now appeared in consequence of events in Russia.

On the 8th November, 1917, the Bolshevik *coup d'Etat* at Petrograd had placed Lenin and Trotsky in power. Hostilities between Russia and the Central Powers were suspended on the 2nd December. The Armistice of Brest-Litovsk was signed on the 15th and negotiations for peace were begun. The Bolshevik formula for peace—"No indemnities, no annexations, and the free determination of peoples"—again appeared during these negotiations. The peace negotiations, above all the principles on which the Bolshevik Government proclaimed they were conducting them, gave the signal for the collapse of the Russian front on Turkish territory. Directed by their committees, the men abandoned their positions and withdrew to the pre-war Turco-Russian frontier. A few weeks later the Russian army of the Caucasus melted away as a disorderly armed rabble struggling for every opportunity to entrain for home.

The abandonment of the Russian front on Turkish soil occurred soon after the British capture of Jerusalem and occupation of Southern Palestine had as good



as wrecked Turco-German hopes in the South and towards Bagdad. Whatever the needs of their hard-pressed southern fronts, whatever the demands of Germany that efforts should be made to save Bagdad, the pan-Turks could not neglect the great opportunity now unrolling itself in the East. On the 3rd March, 1918, peace was signed at Brest-Litovsk between Russia and the Central Alliance, including Turkey. Under it Russia agreed to complete the evacuation of the Anatolian provinces, and do what she could towards their orderly return to Turkey. She also undertook to evacuate the provinces of Kars, Ardahan and Batum, lost by Turkey in 1878, and not to concern herself in their future reorganisation, but to leave that to "the population of these districts, in agreement with the neighbouring States, particularly Turkey." Turkish and German interests now diverged more sharply than ever. More and more Bagdad was regarded as the symbol of those German interests to which Turkish interests were still being sacrificed by Enver Pasha. At this stage Mustafa Kemal Pasha was able to intervene decisively.

In November 1917 he had flung up his command of an army in the Yilderim Group owing to a quarrel with von Falkenhayn, and at the beginning of 1918 he was the accepted leader of those pan-Turks who demanded that the remaining resources of Turkey should be used not in the south for propping German interests, but in the north for realising pan-Turkish aspirations. He recognised that Germany had lost the war. He and his supporters therefore required that 100,000 Turkish troops should be concentrated in the Caucasus and North-West Persia.

In Caucasia was a Moslem population of some 2 millions, in race akin to Turks, pan-Islamic or even pan-Turkish in sympathies, untouched by Russian conscription, and therefore containing an invaluable reserve of fighting men. If 100,000 Turkish troops were established in this region when Germany collapsed, the exhausted *Entente* Powers would be unable to expel them, and infinite and surprising possibilities would open for Turkey in Caucasia and the basin of the Caspian. So Mustafa Kemal declared; and early in 1918 he and his supporters compelled Enver Pasha to adopt their policy and endeavour to put it into execution.

The Turkish eastward advance in Anatolia began with the recovery of Trebizond at the end of February 1918. By the middle of May not only were the Anatolian provinces lately occupied by Russia again in Turkish possession, but Turkish troops held the districts of Batum, Kars and Ardahan, and were preparing to continue their advance to the Caspian.

The fantastic history of the embryonic Caucasian States lies outside the scope of this paper. We are concerned only with the greater rival national movements, external in source, that endeavoured to establish dominance in Caucasia, Northern Persia and the Caspian, as the key position for Central Asia and much of Western Asia.

While the pan-Turks were thus belatedly striving to reach the basin of the Caspian, Germany was seeking the same goal. Her measures to establish an alternative route to the East, begun when the Bagdad corridor was seen to have become a frustrated ambition, had so far been successful. In March 1918 her troops had occupied Odessa; on the 1st May, Sevastopol; and in both ports they had seized shipping. Germany could thus ignore the violent hostility of her Turkish ally. On the 8th June she concluded at Batum a treaty with Georgia under which that State accepted a friendly and protective occupation by German troops—an occupation for which, by the way, an invitation had been obtained from Georgia. By this treaty Germany undertook to secure peace between Georgia and Turkey and to prevent any infringement by the latter of Georgian rights and neutrality. This adroit move gave Germany a footing in Caucasia and control of the only railway from the Black Sea to Baku, while at the same time enabling her to deny use of the railway to her ally. The day that the treaty was signed a German expeditionary force landed in Georgia, and four days later (on the 12th June) a German garrison was holding Tiflis, the capital. That the treaty was no empty formality the Turks found soon afterwards. They endeavoured to send guns and men from Batum through Georgia to Baku, but their trains were turned back at the Batum-Georgian frontier by German troops.

Under German influence Turkey concluded two treaties at Batum on the day that the German-Georgian treaty was signed, one with Georgia, the other with the Armenian Republic of Erivan. Under the second of these treaties Turkey recognised the independence of the Erivan Republic, but in return the republic was required to accept a Turkish occupation and to give free passage to Turkish troops across Armenian territory. This arrangement provided Turkey with railway communication to Tabriz in Persia, and road communication with the Republic of Azerbaijan and Baku.



Even before the signing of the three treaties at Batum, Turkish measures for occupying Azerbaijan and North-Western Persia had gone far towards execution. Turkish troops had marched across Armenian territory and in the first days of June 1918 reached Elisavetopol, the temporary capital of Azerbaijan, and on the 16th June another Turkish force, sent from Van, had occupied Tabriz. In Azerbaijan the Turks were among friends. The Moslem population and the Government of the Republic alike favoured union with Turkey rather than the alternative of union with the neighbouring Christian Republics of Erivan and Georgia. The Turks had forestalled the Germans and got between them and Baku; they were anxious now to eject the Bolsheviks established there and forestall the British.

The Bolshevik Government of Russia might profess extreme social, economic and political idealism for acceptance by their people, but when it came to dealing with problems involving the external interests of their country they were realists who made sure of the substance while claiming merit for surrendering the shadow. For instance, they never failed to recognise the importance to Russia of retaining control of the Caucasian region; not alone for the oil it yielded, but also for the command it gave of the Caspian and the easy access to Persia and Central Asia afforded by that sea. In fact, these two outer lands of political opportunity and advantage for Russia meant as much to Bolshevik foreign policy as they had to the policy of Imperial Russia.

Understanding these facts, the Bolsheviks had lost no time in endeavouring to re-establish their authority in Baku. In January 1918 they had contrived, with powerful Armenian aid, to evict the pro-Turkish Tatar population and the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and set up an administration of their own. When Turkish troops advanced towards Baku the Bolshevik-Armenian combination fell out, and a new Government, opposed both to Bolsheviks and Turks, was formed on the 26th July, 1918. This body, the Central Caspian Dictatorship, at once invited British support. General Dunsterville and a detachment of British troops reached Baku from Persia on the 5th August. But the Turks compelled them to re-embark on the 14th September and took possession of the town the following day.

Before achieving this success the Turks had occupied Persian Azerbaijan and the south-western coast line of the Caspian that belonged to it and sent troops northward into Daghestan. After Baku had fallen they took steps towards uniting the two portions of ancient Azerbaijan (the Persian and the republic of the name) into one province with Baku as the capital, thus unifying the Tatar population of this region. They also continued the occupation of Daghestan, indicating the Terek River and Petrovsk as their northern limits. They were engaged thus at the beginning of October 1918, regardless of events in the south, and chiefly anxious to establish themselves on the Caspian.

But the end of Turkish participation in the war was now in sight. In Palestine the battles of Megiddo ended on the 25th September in the destruction of the Turkish army, and on the 1st October Damascus was in British and Arab hands. Bulgaria signed an armistice with the *Entente* Powers on the 30th September, thus exposing Constantinople and the Turkish flank in Europe. In Syria, the British reached Aleppo and cut Turkish rail communications with Mesopotamia on the 28th October. And in Mesopotamia a British advance on Mosul, began on the 23rd October, led to the battle of Shargat and the surrender of the Turkish army on the Tigris on the 30th October.

Turkey had definitely lost the war, and with it all her Arab provinces; but Anatolia was untouched, and Turkish troops were in occupation of Turkish-speaking Moslem areas of Caucasia and Persia where, it was hoped, some territory might be gained. It was judged better to end hostilities while in this position than to hold out longer and be in worse case. The effort to realise pan-Turkish ambitions, made, as Mustafa Kemal has said, too late and with insufficient military forces, had failed of complete achievement. But, even so, it had done something in the desired direction though that something might prove to be impermanent.

The Armistice of Mudros, which took effect on the 31st October, 1918, included articles expressly intended to prevent Turkey benefiting by her conquests in Transcaucasia and Persia. It opened the Black Sea to warships of the *Entente* Powers. It required the immediate withdrawal of Turkish troops, both from Transcaucasia and Persia. Railways under Turkish control in these regions were to be placed at the disposal of the Allies. Batum was to be occupied by Allied troops and Turkey was not to object to a similar occupation of Baku. These demands of the armistice were duly fulfilled; and it seemed that pan-Turkish eastern



(12)

ambitions, if cherished any longer, might be ranked with the idlest of a people's dreams. Yet, within the next three years, Turkish troops were again in Batum; Turkey had permanently recovered the districts of Kars and Ardahan; and only the restoration of Russian authority in other parts of Caucasia barred Mustafa Kemal from obtaining a Caspian seaboard for the Turkish Republic. Such were the surprising alternations of failure and success that attended the efforts of the pan-Turks, during and immediately after the war, to realise their ambitions in the East.

To the Bagdad Railway, as representing the German corridor to the Persian Gulf and the East, the aim of German effort for nearly twenty years, a few more words may be spared.

After it was seen that the British army in Mesopotamia had made Bagdad its objective, the necessity of preventing British occupation of territory through which the corridor must pass forced itself more and more on the German High Command. The farther the prospect of obtaining decisive German victory in Europe receded, the more anxious the command became for Bagdad. If the war ended in anything short of an imposed peace, it was clear that the fate of the corridor might turn on the military situation existing in Mesopotamia at the time hostilities ceased. If Bagdad were then in Turkish possession and British occupation limited to the Basra region, the corridor might perhaps be saved; if, on the other hand, the British were holding Bagdad and had pushed their occupation northward of it, the corridor would be as good as lost. The defence of Bagdad, the recovery of Bagdad after the British had taken it, became, therefore, a dominating German interest. Enver Pasha's obsession for the recovery of the city, to the prejudice of other Turkish war fronts, was, in fact, an obsession passed on to him by his German paymasters. In this way defence of the railway and of its future exercised a deep influence on the course of the war in Turkey. In this way, too, it may be said that the British campaign from the Persian Gulf not only determined the fate of the German corridor to the East, but decisively limited Turkish military effort in Palestine and towards the Caspian and Central Asia.

Chapter (5).—Persia (1914–19).

During the war Germany sought to use the territory of neutral Persia as a thoroughfare and base for reaching Afghanistan and India to the injury of Great Britain. With less dangerous design and less persistence in execution, Turkey did the same, but she also endeavoured to realise that part of her territorial ambitions which called for the annexation of Persian provinces. Russia was chiefly concerned with defending, and perhaps enlarging, the position she had already secured for herself in the Kingdom of the Shahs. And Great Britain directed her energies mainly to closing to her enemies the avenues of approach through Persia to Central Asia, and thereby to Afghanistan and India, and to maintaining some degree of security in those Persian regions in which her established interests lay. Meanwhile each of the two hostile alliances contended for the favour and support of the Shah, Government and people with varying success. Military operations, in which forces representing all the warring Powers took part, were conducted on the soil of Persia, but they were always of minor importance and subservient to the ebb and flow of the great campaigns in the Caucasus, Gallipoli, Mesopotamia and Palestine.

In this sphere of conflicting neutrality and hostilities little occurred that directly affected the British position in the Gulf; Persia during the war is, therefore, a subject to be treated briefly here.

In August 1914 Russian troops were in occupation of Tabriz, Khoi, Maku and Urmia, all in the Russian zone; the Turks had encroached into Persian territory west of Lake Urmia; British consular guards of Indian cavalry were at Isfahan and Shiraz, and small detachments of Indian infantry at Bushire, Jask, Shahbar and Henjam Island.

Russia and Russians excited almost universal Persian hatred, and this feeling was extended to Great Britain to some extent as the ally of Russia and her partner in the Anglo-Russian Convention of 1907. Turkey was feared for the designs she was supposed to cherish for the annexation of Persian territory. But at the same time her pan-Islamic aims commanded a certain amount of theoretical and passive sympathy among Persians as Moslems.

Persia herself was helpless, even unable to enforce the neutrality of her territory,



"ملخص تاريخي للأحداث في أراضي الإمبراطورية العثمانية، فارس وشبه الجزيرة العربية التي تؤثر على الموقف البريطاني في الخليج الفارسي، ١٩٠٧-١٩٢٨" [١٢ظ] (١٨٨/٣١)

and therefore, whatever her hostility to Russia, desired to remain neutral during the war. The maintenance of a not unfriendly neutrality by Persia was what His Majesty's Government desired most, for as a feeble ally she would have been a liability. They were strongly opposed to assuming dangerous commitments in Persia, yet British political and commercial interests were so great, especially in the south and south-west and the oil-field near Mohammerah, that no British Government could maintain an attitude of complete detachment towards Persian affairs.

Among the influences hostile to the Allies was that of the Swedish officers of the Persian gendarmerie. Almost to a man, they were anti-Russian, pro-German and industrious in preaching the military inferiority of the Allies, the might of Germany, and the certainty of ultimate German triumph in the war. Their influence was particularly strong and correspondingly dangerous in the South Persian Province of Fars, ever prone to lawlessness and disorder.

The country was soon flooded with German and Turkish consuls and agents, who used every artifice of propaganda to discredit the Allies and inflame the Government and people against them, and bring Persia into the war. Enemy efforts were much assisted by high-handed Russian action at the end of 1914, in recruiting a force of Persians to fight the Turks, and in diverting the Persian Cossack Brigade, a Persian Government formation under Russian officers, to the same purpose. Hatred of Russia and the acute delight Persians discovered in seeing Russia flouted by Germany in Persia, ensured the ready acceptance of enemy propaganda, and caused public opinion to oppose any Government action that might have limited German activities.

From the opening weeks of the war Turkish and Russian forces had violated Persian territory in Azerbaijan. At the end of January 1915 Turkish troops advanced from Mesopotamia, entered Persia, and destroyed sections of the pipe-line to Abadan. Thereupon British troops also entered Persia and occupied Ahwaz for the protection of the oil-fields. The Persian Government professed the intention of resisting Turkish aggression in this region by arms; but found so much pro-Turkish sympathy among their people that they refrained, and protested against the British occupation of Ahwaz.

In May 1915, when the situation in Tehran, Shiraz, and the hinterland of Bushire had grown considerably worse, His Majesty's Government decided that they would leave the interior of Persia alone and confine themselves for the present to holding the Bushire peninsula. In July the town of Bushire was unsuccessfully attacked by tribes under German influence; but in August the town and peninsula were occupied by troops from India. As the chief trade route from the Gulf ran from Bushire to Shiraz, and passed thence through Persia to Central Asia, Bushire was a position of the utmost importance, and was repeatedly attacked at German instigation, though without success. The Persian Government, too, made insistent efforts to negotiate the evacuation of the peninsula by our troops. But the conditions His Majesty's Government laid down involved the restoration of security on the Shiraz road, and as this could not be assured, our occupation continued.

One of the chief objects the Germans had in view was to reach Afghanistan, India and Central Asia from Persia. A German-Turco Mission, bearing an autograph letter from the German Emperor to the Ameer of Afghanistan, arrived in Persia in the spring of 1915. During the following summer the mission, broken up into small armed columns, began making its way from Isfahan towards the Afghan frontier; each party was too strong to be arrested without actual fighting, and the Persian Government would not undertake the responsibility of employing force to that extent. It remained, therefore, for Great Britain and Russia to take steps to intercept these detachments. On the British part, this was done by establishing the East Persia Cordon from the Indian Ocean to Birjand; from Birjand northward to Meshed the duties of the patrol were undertaken by Russia. These measures were effective to the extent that only the party headed by the German leader reached Kabul. But German efforts were so persistent, and the dangers apprehended from them so great that before the end of the war the cordon had grown into the East Persia Field Force.

Repeated Allied failure at the Dardanelles produced immediate reactions in Persia. In the summer of 1915 the attitude of the Persian officers of the gendarmerie at Shiraz, countenanced by the Swedish officers, became so hostile that His Majesty's Government withheld the financial support they had hitherto given the force. In September of that year, when the Dardanelles expedition had plainly failed, the Shah and Government fell more than ever under enemy influence. The Germans were virtually masters in Kermanshah, Isfahan and Shiraz, and had good prospects of



obtaining the upper hand in Tehran; it appeared, indeed, that only outstanding military success by the Allies or strong action in Tehran would enable their Legations and subjects to remain in Persia. The arrival of Russian reinforcements at Enzeli eased matters for a time; but in October German and Turkish influence had reasserted itself. A convention between Germany and Persia was being negotiated, and it was known that an attack on the British Legation by Persian gendarmerie and anti-Ally elements in Tehran was in preparation.

The serious state of affairs influenced His Majesty's Government in deciding that the army in Mesopotamia should be allowed to advance on Bagdad, for the Turco-German position in Persia hung upon possession of the Bagdad-Kermanshah road.

However, the Tehran situation was suddenly changed by the arrival of further Russian reinforcements at Enzeli at the end of October, followed by an advance on Tehran. The *coup d'Etat*, including an attack on the British Legation and an attempt to spirit the Shah away to Kermanshah and there set up a new Government, was timed for the 15th November. Russian troops arrived within a few hours' march of Tehran the same day, and, though they were stopped and did not enter the city, the fact that they were near wrecked at that point Turco-German plans and caused the German, Austrian and Turkish representatives to leave the capital hastily, and without the Shah, on the date fixed for the *coup d'Etat*. The German representative and a number of Persian supporters went to Qum, where they established the Persian "Committee of National Defence."

Meanwhile, matters had come to a head in Shiraz. On the 10th November, 1915, the gendarmerie, led by their Persian officers, instigated by the German consul, seized and imprisoned the British consul and colony. The outrage seriously alarmed the Persian Government and caused them to renew their impracticable proposals to the Allies for an alliance. But of greater importance was the influence of the Shiraz affair on His Majesty's Government. They had the strongest objections to intervening in Persia, and undertaking commitments that might have dangerous and incalculable developments; but their reluctance was being undermined. The outrage at Shiraz, for which no redress could be obtained, went far towards breaking down the policy of non-intervention in the interior of Persia that His Majesty's Government had followed so far.

At the end of November 1915 the Russians were in a position to strike at the root of German and Turkish activities by military operations west and south of Tehran. These operations were directed to obtaining control of the Hamadan Road, the Turco-German line of communications for Central and South Persia, and had as a further purpose an advance to Mesopotamia and co-operation there with the British. During December, therefore, a Russian force under Baratoff occupied Hamadan and Qum, the seat of the "Committee of National Defence." At this time the siege of Kut-el-Amara was in progress, and a threat by Baratoff to the Turkish line of communications in Mesopotamia would have been invaluable.

Under the influence of Baratoff's operations a pro-Ally Persian Government had come into power with Farman Farma as Prime Minister. This Government agreed in January 1916 to the Persian Cossack Brigade being increased to 10,000 men, to be officered, equipped and maintained by Russia in North Persia for the duration of the war. The British Minister at Tehran then suggested to His Majesty's Government that a similar force, but under British command and control, should be organised for South Persia. In view of recent events at Shiraz, disorder and confusion in Fars amounting to rebellion, and the closing of the Bushire-Shiraz trade-route, His Majesty's Government decided to adopt this measure of intervention, to which Persian Government had given their approval. On the 26th January, 1916, Brigadier-General Sir P. Sykes was appointed to organise and command a force to be known as the South Persia Rifles.

Winter weather and Turkish resistance held up Baratoff's advance towards Mesopotamia. He took Kermanshah at the end of February and Rowanduz on the 13th May, but by that time Kut-el-Amara had fallen, and the Turks now concentrated considerable forces for an advance against him.

Meanwhile, His Majesty's Government had supplied the Persian Governor-General of Fars with arms and munitions at Bushire. With this help he advanced to Shiraz, dispersed the rebellious gendarmerie, and occupied the city at the end of April 1916. Sir P. Sykes, too, was already active in South Persia, and in the middle of May had reached Kerman with a force of 800 Indian troops, and was to proceed thence to Shiraz.

In June the Turks, having taken Kut-el-Amara, began an invasion of Persia from Mesopotamia which carried them to Kermanshah at the beginning of July 1916.



In the second week of August they had captured Hamadan and were threatening to cut Tehran off from the Caspian. Indeed, Baratoff advised the Russian Minister to prepare for evacuating the capital and Isfahan.

The position at Tehran and Isfahan being so critical, Sir P. Sykes was instructed to proceed to Isfahan and support the Russians before continuing his march to Shiraz. He reached Isfahan on the 11th September. Six weeks later he resumed his march and entered Shiraz in the middle of November. A check at the end of December to one of his punitive columns operating from Shiraz led to reinforcements of Indian troops being sent him by the Bunder Abbas road, but the possibility that a relief force might have to operate from Bushire to extricate him was now before His Majesty's Government.

In February 1917 the influence of British successes on the Tigris made itself felt in Persia, and during that month and the next the Turkish forces retired from Persian territory. They were closely followed by Baratoff, whose troops were again on the frontier of Mesopotamia by the 31st March.

But at this stage the Russian revolution intervened. At the end of March the belief was prevalent in Tehran that the new Russian Government would reverse Tsarist policy in Persia, withdraw the Russian troops and cancel objectionable agreements. Towards the end of May Baratoff's force retired from the frontier of Mesopotamia; the Turks followed them, and His Majesty's Government were compelled to reinforce the army on the Tigris from India. The prestige of the Allies in Tehran was diminished, with the result that the Government repudiated the recognition given the South Persia Rifles by its predecessors.

The suspension of hostilities between Russia and the Central Powers in December 1917 was soon followed by the dissolution of the Russian army in the Caucasus and Persia, including the Russian sector of the cordon on the Afghan border. Transcaucasia was thrown open to the advance of Turkish and German troops, and once these had reached the Caspian, Persia, Central Asia, Afghanistan would be exposed to enemy penetration. The danger was intensified by the presence of many thousands of Austrian and German prisoners of war at large in Turkestan. In February, therefore, British troops took over the sector of the cordon abandoned by the Russians. And because the necessity for ensuring British access to the Caspian and control of that sea had become urgent, His Majesty's Government, early in March 1918, informed the Persian Government of their intention to hold the road from Mesopotamia to the Caspian by British troops as far as might be found necessary. But it was July before the road from Hamadan to Enzeli was under British control.

Meanwhile, the situation in Fars had grown serious, owing largely to the action of the Persian Minister of the Interior, who incited the tribes to attack the Indian troops and South Persia Rifles. Sharp fighting near Shiraz between tribesmen and Indian troops occurred in May and June 1918, strong fanatical feeling against the British was general throughout the province, grave disaffection appeared in the South Persia Rifles, and it appeared that soon the Indian troops might be invested in Shiraz. Preparations were begun, therefore, for sending a relief column from Bushire.

As a precaution against untoward developments that might perhaps appear in Persia, and in order to supply the East Persia Cordon, the Government of India, in the summer of 1916, began extending the railway from Nushki, in Baluchistan, towards the Persian frontier at Mirjawa. At the end of August 1918, in view of the collapse of Russia and the Turco-German threat in the Caspian basin, His Majesty's Government authorised the continuation of the line into Persian territory at Duzdap, and the completion of surveys for carrying the line of Neh, a matter of some 200 miles further, entirely within Persia.

Matters developed rapidly in Transcaucasia after the conclusion of peace between Russia and the Central Powers by the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk on the 11th March, 1918. The Germans occupied Georgia, the Turks lost no time in advancing on Baku, and the local Bolshevik-Armenian Government of Baku—which controlled the Caspian Fleet—invited British aid at the end of July. A British force under General Dunsterville reached Baku from Enzeli at the beginning of August, but was compelled to re-embark on the 15th September. The Turks now occupied the city, though without securing any shipping. But within the next few weeks they had extended their occupation northward into Daghestan and southward over Persian Azerbaijan, including the Caspian coastline of that province, and were taking steps to unite the province with the republic of the same name, and form the whole into a Moslem State dependent on Turkey.



In view of the course events were taking in Transcaucasia, His Majesty's Government had ordered the occupation of Krasnovodsk, on the eastern coast of the Caspian and terminus of the Transcaspian Railway, and this had been effected at the end of August. A British naval detachment had also secured, and were arming, a number of Caspian steamers. By these means, as long as Enzeli was held, British domination of the Caspian was assured, and Turkish and German military operations were confined to the Caucasian side of the Caspian.

Much, therefore, depended on the British position in Persia being maintained. In order to reach this end the Government of India had steadily advocated a policy that would conciliate the Government and people and restore Persian confidence in Great Britain. The two main obstacles in the way of this desirable change were the Convention of 1907 and the existence of the South Persia Rifles. His Majesty's Government had already declared that they regarded the convention as being in abeyance; they were also willing to abolish the title "South Persia Rifles," and to treat the force as part of the Persian army, but they insisted that its British officers must be retained during the war. In return for these concessions they required the co-operation of the Persian Government in restoring order in South Persia.

The matters at issue were brought to a head at the end of September 1918 by the Persian Government then in power—a Government more or less favourable to Great Britain—pressing His Majesty's Government for a declaration of British policy regarding Persian independence, the Anglo-Russian Convention, and the South Persia Rifles. The upshot was that on the 23rd November His Majesty's Government assured the Persian Government that they reiterated their pledges respecting the independence of Persia; that they regarded the convention in suspense, had no intention of renewing it, and would press for its abrogation; and that the South Persia Rifles would be transferred to the Persian Governor-General of Fars subject to the safeguards and reservations which had already been agreed upon by both Governments.

The preparations that had been begun in June 1918 to open the road from Bushire to Shiraz were completed by the middle of September. The rebel Khans were still defiant and rejected all proposals for negotiation. The expeditionary force considered necessary to overcome rebel opposition eventually exceeded a ration strength of 11,000 men.

The operations had the approval and support of the Persian Government, whose interests were involved in the defeat of the rebel Khans and the reopening of the great trade route. The advance from Bushire began on the 26th September. It had been hoped to complete the operations by the end of December. But the difficulties of railway and road construction, combined with the great epidemic of influenza, delayed progress, and it was the end of January 1919 before a column from Bushire joined hands with one coming southward from Shiraz.

The road had been reopened; but the problem remained unsolved of how order generally, and the security of the trade route were to be maintained after the withdrawal of the British troops.

Meanwhile, hostilities with Turkey had ended on the 31st October, 1918. The armistice of Mudros gave the Allies free access to the Black Sea, provided for the occupation of Baku and Batum by Allied troops, and required the withdrawal of Turkish forces from Persia.

Chapter (6).—Arabia (1914–19).

As the shadow of the Great War approached, the Turks endeavoured to reconcile Ibn Saud and Ibn Rashid, the Emir of Hail, and obtain a promise of their military co-operation with the Ottoman Power. These overtures were put aside by the Emir of Nejd. In October 1914 the Sheikh of Koweit, on his own initiative, wrote to Ibn Saud stating that he intended to stand by His Majesty's Government if war with Turkey broke out, and that he advised Ibn Saud to do the same. The latter replied that if war with Turkey came he "would stand by the sheikh and the British Government."

In November 1914 His Majesty's Government opened negotiations with Ibn Saud; asked for his co-operation in the war, and offered in return to guarantee him against Turkish attack, recognise him as independent ruler of Nejd and Hasa, and enter into treaty relations with him. These proposals became the basis of subse-



quent negotiations. Meanwhile Captain W. H. I. Shakespear had been instructed to proceed to Nejd on a special mission to Ibn Saud.

Captain Shakespear reached Ibn Saud's camp on the 31st December, 1914. He found that the Emir was resolved to remain neutral until he could secure a binding treaty with His Majesty's Government, and that what he sought was a solid guarantee of his position under what would be, in effect, British suzerainty. On the 4th January, 1915, Captain Shakespear sent Sir P. Cox a translation of Ibn Saud's rough draft of the treaty he proposed. This draft, as Captain Shakespear pointed out, asked for little more than had already been offered in the British proposals of November, if these were intended to apply to the future as well as the present. "In exchange," Captain Shakespear wrote, "Ibn Saud offers to make himself a British vassal for good."

On the 17th January, 1915, Ibn Saud received a letter from the Shereef of Mecca's second son, which stated that the Turks were urgently pressing the Shereef to proclaim the *jihad* and call up the tribes, but that he was temporising until he could learn what attitude Ibn Saud had adopted towards the Turks and British. Ibn Saud read the letter aloud to Captain Shakespear and asked him what reply would be advantageous to Great Britain.

In reply, Ibn Saud advised the Shereef to temporise further, pleading fear of a British attack on Jeddah. He explained that for himself he saw no advantage in siding with the Turks. He added that he had himself just returned a temporising reply to a mission sent to him by the Porte, and alleged his pending operations against Ibn Rashid and fear of a British attack on Qatif as reasons for caution. It was a timely service, of which the full value may have been very great. At the beginning of January 1915 the Shereef of Mecca was in doubt as to which side he should take with the greater prospect of success. His inclinations, his judgment, impelled him to support Great Britain; but Turkish garrisons were on his territory, holding all his chief cities; the war had not begun well for the Allies; he had everything to lose by taking part in unsuccessful hostilities against the Turk. While thus hovering in doubt he received Ibn Saud's reply, and was encouraged to continue temporising; those who looked to Mecca for a sign saw none, and the *jihad* became merely Turkish in its authority and left Arabia unstirred. Nor was the silence of Mecca at this critical time without its influence in the wider Islam.

Although Ibn Saud had not yet committed himself to supporting Great Britain, a renewal of the conflict between him and his enemy, Ibn Rashid, who, at the head of a confederation of pro-Turkish tribes, had entered Northern Nejd, began early in January. The two armies encountered at Jerrab on the 24th January in one of the greatest battles, in point of numbers engaged and casualties suffered, that Arabian history can show. Here, too, Captain Shakespear, present as a spectator, met his death. The battle ended in a draw, a result more favourable for Ibn Saud than for his enemy, and hostilities were tacitly suspended. But Ibn Rashid was put out of action, could not join the Turks as he had intended, and so could not take part in the early campaign in Mesopotamia, where his appearance at the head of his tribes might have added considerably to our difficulties.

A formal peace was signed by the rival Emirs on the 10th June, 1915, in which Ibn Rashid renounced his pretensions to Qasim; but the situation that resulted between them was that of an armed neutrality varied by recurring hostilities.

Later in 1915 Ibn Saud had to deal with a serious rising of the Ajman tribe in Northern Hasa, and with the Al Murrah in the south. During these struggles, in which Ibn Saud was hard pressed, we assisted him with arms and munitions sent from Bahrein, and in October gave him 1,000 rifles and lent him £20,000.

In November 1915, seven months before the Shereef of Mecca began his rising against the Turks, and while Ibn Saud was embarrassed with the Ajman and Al Murrah, the Shereef sent a considerable force under his son Abdullah into Western Nejd. The purpose of this ill-timed incursion, which got within 70 miles of Ibn Saud's capital, was political—to support the claim of a Hejaz tribe to alleged rights in Southern Qasim. This movement excited Ibn Saud's violent indignation, and he protested to His Majesty's Government that if they could not restrain the Shereef's activities he would do so himself. But no untoward results ensued beyond the creation of ill-will on the part of Ibn Saud towards the Shereef.

Negotiations for a treaty between Ibn Saud and His Majesty's Government were now nearing conclusion. The reasons making such a treaty desirable from the British point of view were stated in a communication from the India Office to the Foreign Office on the 30th January, 1915. The treaty would be desirable, the India Office wrote, " . . . . not merely from the exigences of the moment, which make it



"ملخص تاريخي للأحداث في أراضي الإمبراطورية العثمانية، فارس وشبه الجزيرة العربية التي تؤثر على الموقف البريطاني في الخليج الفارسي، ١٩٠٧-١٩٢٨" [١٥و] (١٨٨/٣٦)

necessary to pay an immediate price for his friendship, but also from the general situation which will be created in the Persian Gulf, as the result of the present war, of the disappearance of Turkish rule from Basra, to which His Majesty's Government are pledged. It may be anticipated that the Emir of Nejd will be left master not only of Central Arabia, but of a long strip of the coast, and in the interest of peace and order it will be essential for the Power that controls the Gulf to have a working agreement with him. The extent, therefore, to which his claims must be met must be measured not only by the immediate services which he may be expected to render, but also by the potential powers for mischief which, in the event of success, he will possess, and if permanently estranged will doubtless exercise . . . ."

The treaty was signed at Qatif by Sir P. Cox and Ibn Saud on the 26th December, 1915, and was ratified by the Viceroy and Governor-General of India on the 18th July, 1916. By this instrument we recognised Ibn Saud as independent ruler of Nejd, Hasa, Qatif and Jubail, and engaged to support him against aggression by any foreign Power "to such extent and in such manner as the British Government, after consulting Ibn Saud, may consider most effective for protecting his interests and countries." For his part Ibn Saud covenanted to have no relations with any foreign Power, and not to cede, sell, mortgage, lease or dispose of any part of his territories to any foreign Power or the subjects of a foreign Power without the consent of His Majesty's Government. It may be remarked that soon after the treaty was ratified the India Office laid down the important decision that "we cannot admit that article 2 (promising His Majesty's Government's support against aggression by any foreign Power) is binding on us against other Arabs."

While British policy towards Ibn Saud, conducted by the Government of India chiefly with an eye to British interests in the Persian Gulf, took the course just outlined, wider necessities of the war were dictating another policy, conducted from London and Cairo, towards the Shereef of Mecca on the western side of the Arabian Peninsula. The secret negotiations between His Majesty's Government and the Shereef, which brought about the Hejaz rising, sought to harmonise the vast ambitions of the Shereef and his Syrian supporters with the Arabian, Syrian and Mesopotamian interests of Great Britain, and the Syrian ambitions of France. The Shereef aimed at uniting the whole of the Arab countries—in Arabia, Syria and Mesopotamia—excepting British Aden and its hinterland, in a confederation, under himself as King or Suzerain. The agreement he actually reached with His Majesty's Government imposed certain limits on this design as to Syria and Mesopotamia. It also made clear that all Arab rulers in treaty relations with His Majesty's Government must be excluded from the scheme unless of their own free will they choose to accept it.

The Arab rising, begun by the Shereef on the 5th June, 1916, was followed, two days later, by the proclamation of Hejaz independence. So far Ibn Saud was unaware of the secret negotiations and the agreement between His Majesty's Government and the Shereef. But after the latter's armed incursion into Nejd in November 1915 the Wahabi ruler seemed to have clearly discerned the wider political ambitions that the war had enabled the Shereef to pursue. In December 1915 he remarked to Sir P. Cox that if the Shereef of Mecca assumed the Caliphate it would make no difference whatever to his status among other Arab rulers. Writing to Sir P. Cox on the 20th July, 1916, he expressed the fear that the success of the rising might encourage the Shereef to claim authority over portions of Nejd; and that he had noticed that the British official communiqué sent to him referred to the Arabs "as a compendious whole." He added that an old feud existed between the Shereef and himself, and that he and his tribesmen would never tolerate control or interference by the Shereef.

In 1916, therefore, the position was that His Majesty's Government were in alliance with and giving support to both rivals for the domination of Arabia; but that from His Majesty's Government's point of view there was no comparison between the importance of the two as allies. Hussein, descendant of the Prophet, Emir and Shereef of Mecca, hereditary guardian of the Holy Places, had already by his action discredited the *jihad*; and might be able to exert for Great Britain an invaluable influence in Islam. Moreover, his territory ran for a thousand miles along the flank of the vital line of British communications in the Red Sea; by the existence of the Hejaz Railway this territory was directly accessible from Constantinople and Germany; he was able to deny all these strategical advantages to our enemies. As a spiritual and secular Prince of Islam and Arabian ruler he seemed, indeed, to be the ally who could deliver the goods.

By comparison, Ibn Saud possessed none of these assets as an ally. His territory



lay chiefly in the heart of Arabia, inaccessible alike to Turks, Germans and ourselves. The chief source of his strength, as then known, sprang from the Wahabism—the most hated and detested creed in Islam—professed by him and his people; indeed, his spiritual influence outside of his own territories was distinctly an embarrassing minus quantity. But he had proved himself an Arab ruler of outstanding ability, ambition and daring; as an ally his chief recommendation to Great Britain was therefore that in that capacity he would be unlikely to interfere with Koweit, the trucial chiefs, and Shereef Hussein in Hejaz. It is difficult, indeed, to see how at this time His Majesty's Government could have formed any other opinion than they did as to the relative value of the two allies. The more so that during the latter part of 1915 Ibn Saud was seriously weakened by the inconclusive battle of Jerrab and rebellion among his outlying tribes. It remains now to glance at the policy Ibn Saud pursued and the events attending it during the succeeding years of the World War.

In August 1916 the Shereef, then at grips with the Turks, sought assistance from Ibn Saud, and proposed an alliance. The Emir of Nejd replied that he would do what he could, but required first a written assurance that in the future the Shereef would avoid interference and aggression in Nejd. He sent with this communication a draft of the assurance he proposed. The Shereef returned both letter and draft with the written comment that the draft could have issued "only from a man bereft of his reason."

At this time His Majesty's Government were anxious that the Shereef and Ibn Saud should co-operate against Ibn Rashid, the pro-Turk Emir of Hail, who had moved against us with the Jebel Shammar tribe and came in conflict with British troops near Zobeir in Mesopotamia. But the strained relations between our two allies precluded any attempt being made.

In the hope of improving matters, the terms of our treaty with Ibn Saud were communicated to the Shereef on the 3rd October, 1916. He was also told that we were endeavouring to obtain the support of the Emir for him. And in the middle of October Sir P. Cox was instructed to inform Ibn Saud that His Majesty's Government would insist on the terms of our treaty with him being recognised by the Shereef, and that they would not support the Shereef against him. These assurances might perhaps have produced results, had not the Shereef taken a step that confirmed all Ibn Saud's misgivings. On the 5th November, 1916, he caused himself to be proclaimed at Mecca as "King of the Arabs" without consulting His Majesty's Government, who thereupon protested against his assumption of a title they refused to recognise. British recognition of the Shereef's kingship never, in fact, went further than to accept him as "King of Hejaz." Hussein's action, however, definitely placed Ibn Saud in violent opposition to the whole Shereefian family and their pretensions to the over-lordship of the Arab race.

On the 11th November, 1916, Ibn Saud met Sir P. Cox at Ojair and explained that he was in great difficulties. These lay around the central fact that his people did not consider their interests were being served by the pro-British policy of their Emir. Qasim and its great body of overland traders had always found their chief markets in the north; the embargo on traffic with Syria and Hail, which Ibn Saud had imposed at the request of His Majesty's Government, had hit Qasim severely and exasperated its people. His Nejdis, too, were becoming restless and asking what benefits they derived from the Emir's alliance with Great Britain, whose policy supported the Shereef of Mecca and the tribes of Hejaz though both were the enemies of Nejd. He was finding it more and more difficult to keep his people in hand.

On the matter of the Shereef's pretensions to kingship of the Arabs—perhaps the chief reason why the Emir had sought the present meeting—he was reassured by Sir P. Cox, who informed him that His Majesty's Government had insisted on the Shereef making formal admission that he claimed no jurisdiction over other independent Arab rulers.

On the 20th November, 1916, Ibn Saud, with the Sheikhs of Koweit and Mohammerah, attended the great *durbar* at Koweit and received the K.C.I.E. He then went on to Basra, where he inspected British troops and hospitals; saw, for the first time, aeroplanes leave the ground and fly; and was presented with a sword of honour. The visit was an unqualified success, and made a profound impression on Ibn Saud. He was unaffectedly gratified by the attention paid him; and it was obvious, thereafter, that Great Britain held a stronger position than ever in the judgment of the Ruler of Nejd.

Ever since the negotiations for the Treaty of December 1915 Sir P. Cox had discussed with Ibn Saud the question of taking action against Ibn Rashid of Hail. The Emir had promised to attack, but so far had not begun operations. He seemed



in fact, to have neglected his opportunities, and thereby laid himself open to Shereef Hussein's reiterated assertion that secretly he was in alliance with Ibn Rashid and the Turks. Sir P. Cox held the opinion that, without the aid of British guns and gun-crews (for which Ibn Saud had applied, but the Indian authorities had found impossible to provide), an Arab attempt on the walled city of Hail would be unsuccessful. The truth seems to have been that Ibn Saud's inactivity was prompted by the recognition of his own insecurity at home—due mainly to the hostility of the Ajman tribe—and to the fear that non-success against Ibn Rashid would mean the ultimate supremacy of the "King of the Arabs."

During the Emir's visit to Basra, however, the part he was to take against Ibn Rashid was made the subject of a definite understanding. He undertook to keep 4,000 men under arms; to hang on Ibn Rashid's flank if that chief again moved on Mesopotamia; and if Ibn Rashid remained at Hail to attack there if opportunity offered. As soon as this arrangement was concluded, His Majesty's Government supplied him with 3,000 rifles and ammunition, and from November 1916 gave him a monthly subsidy of £5,000. It was also agreed that co-operation between Ibn Saud and the Shereef was impracticable.

By this time King Hussein had expelled all Turkish forces from Hejaz territory except the division entrenched at Medina. These positions the Shereef's troops proved utterly incapable of carrying by assault, and it was clear that Medina could be reduced only by starvation. It appeared, nevertheless, that caravans from Koweit and Mesopotamia were reaching Medina and Hail, viâ Qasim, despite Ibn Saud's embargo. The Shereef now again charged Ibn Saud with being in league with the Turks. He was helping them to provision Medina; helping them to send money to their troops in Yemen; he was in friendly correspondence with Ibn Rashid; he was stirring up the Ikhwan to attack Hejaz. These charges were almost certainly groundless, except as to supplies reaching Medina and Hail by the agency of those immemorial desert traders, the Qasim merchants, a traffic Ibn Saud admitted, deplored, but confessed himself powerless to prevent. The Shereef's attitude to Ibn Saud became so offensive that His Majesty's Government caused him to be warned that we intended to uphold our treaty obligations with the Emir.

But while King Hussein was difficult and over-bearing towards Ibn Saud, it must not be supposed that he was without real grounds for the animosity and fear with which he regarded his formidable rival. There can be no doubt that, from the time Hussein proclaimed himself "King of the Arabs," Ibn Saud began to take measures undermining his authority.

The generous subsidy His Majesty's Government paid the King enabled him to buy the support of tribes outside his own territory, and to attract recruits in thousands from Nejd itself, a form of competition in which Ibn Saud found it impossible to hold his own. To the King's policy of obtaining the hegemony of Arabia by a lavish distribution of English gold Ibn Saud opposed the spiritual force of Akhwanism; nor was the issue long in doubt. The movement had spread with startling rapidity in Nejd during 1915; it was systematically directed now against Hejaz. Expounded among the King's tribes adjoining Nejd by Ibn Saud's trained propagandists, Akhwanism made headway among these borderland Hejazis like the tide against the wind. Under its spiritual appeal wives forsook husbands who had served in the King's forces, and the men themselves were boycotted by their fellows until they had purged their offence by public contrition and penance. Even the King's officials abandoned their allegiance and passed over to his rival in the course of this political and spiritual erosion.

Towards the end of 1917 Ibn Saud complained that, although receiving £5,000 a month from His Majesty's Government he was spending double the sum on the force he had undertaken to maintain against Ibn Rashid; and that even so, his men were being attracted away by the King's gold. He asked that a British officer should be despatched urgently to Riyadh.

Mr. H. St. J. Philby with two British officers were sent in response and arrived at Riyadh at the end of December 1917. They found Ibn Saud greatly preoccupied with Hussein's assumption of the title "King of Hejaz," and asking for greater equality of treatment by His Majesty's Government, both financially and politically, compared with the King. The mission recommended that Ibn Saud should be given 8,000 more rifles, ammunition in proportion, and be supplied with trained crews to man the guns and maxims he already possessed. The idea was that a fully-equipped force of some 15,000 men should be created for an attack on Ibn Rashid at Hail.

The proposal to arm Ibn Saud on this scale was vigorously opposed by the



authorities in Cairo. The British High Commissioner there wrote, on the 25th December, 1917, that with a force of this strength, supported by a horde of hard-fighting Wahabi zealots, Ibn Saud might sweep through Hejaz and Arabia "to the confusion of our Arab and Moslem policies." In the end the idea of greatly increasing Ibn Saud's armaments was rejected by His Majesty's Government.

It is unnecessary to detail the relations of the King and the Emir during the years 1918–19, nor the efforts made by His Majesty's Government to maintain peace between their Arab allies. Still less to look at the differences of opinion that developed between the British authorities in Cairo and Bagdad in regard to policy towards the King and Ibn Saud. These matters scarcely pertain to the Persian Gulf. It will suffice, therefore, to notice only the milestones of Ibn Saud's progress in 1918 and 1919 towards the domination of Arabia.

It may be remarked that in 1917 and 1918 his pressure on the King progressively increased as the northward advance of the British army in Palestine, accompanied by the Shereefian force under the Emir Feisal, improved the prospect of the King's supremacy being established in Syria.

The policy Ibn Saud followed on the eastern borders of Hejaz caused in 1918 the secession of whole districts from their allegiance to the King. Hussein endeavoured to reassert his authority by arms, but failed in several minor conflicts with the Akhwan, who were assisted by their brethren from Nejd. So far the struggle was local, and apparently without the approval or visible support of Ibn Saud. He informed His Majesty's Government, however, that he was under the greatest pressure to intervene, and would be unable to resist it indefinitely.

In 1918 he sent an expedition against Hail, but it achieved nothing of importance.

In May 1919 when the Emir Feisal was established in possession of Damascus, matters came to a head at Taraba, on the eastern border of Hejaz. A considerable army that King Hussein had collected there under his son Abdullah to re-establish the Royal authority was attacked by the Akhwan at night and completely destroyed. By the efforts of His Majesty's Government, an open rupture between Ibn Saud and the King was averted at this time, but the Wahabi Emir pledged his people that in the event of further action by Hussein he would call out the Akhwan and take the field in person.

For Ibn Saud the period of the World War may be said to have ended in May 1919 with the affair of Taraba.

PART III.—POST-WAR PERIOD (1918–28).

Chapter (7).—Iraq (1918–28).

The armistice of Mudros (31st October, 1918) found a British army in occupation of Mesopotamia from the Persian Gulf to within a few miles of Mosul. That city itself was occupied on the 8th November.

On the 7th November, 1918, appeared the Anglo-French declaration, which stated definitely that the purpose of British and French policy in Mesopotamia and Syria was to establish in the liberated countries national Governments and Administrations which should derive their authority from the free choice of the indigenous populations. The declaration stated further, that it was the purpose of the two Powers to recognise these Governments as soon as they had been actually established.

The declaration was taken at its face value—and much more—throughout the liberated territories, and provided, and has continued to provide, a standard for fulfilment, both as to degree and time, probably beyond the intentions of the declaratory Governments.

With the adoption of the principle of mandates by the Peace Conference at Paris it was known that the mandate for Mesopotamia would be given to Great Britain. But the conference delayed long in dealing with the subject.

British prestige, which had stood so high in Mesopotamia at the time of the armistice, began to decline in 1919. The system of administration adopted was becoming progressively unpopular as too complicated and costly for the country. The cost of living had increased, a fact attributed to the British, and the dissatisfaction arising from these matters and from fears for the future, was seized upon and fanned by malcontents and agitators—Bagdadis, Turks and Syrians. Meanwhile, the British troops were being rapidly evacuated, and the administrative services were losing their trained and experienced officials.



17

The uncertainty and discontent of this time led to a movement, towards the end of 1919, in favour of the union of Mesopotamia with Syria under the rule of the Emir Feisal, son of the King of Hejaz, then established in practical independence in Damascus.

In March 1920 a Congress of Notables sitting at Damascus offered the Crown of Syria to Feisal, who accepted it with the title of King; the same congress nominated Abdullah, Feisal's brother, for the kingship of Mesopotamia—or Iraq.

Early in May it was definitely announced that at the conference at San Remo the mandate for Mesopotamia had been assigned to Great Britain, and that for Syria to France.

In July the French deposed Feisal, expelled him from Syria, occupied Damascus on the 7th August, and destroyed the independent Arab State of so many hopes. This, then, it seemed to the Arabs of Mesopotamia, was the mandate system in operation.

Disappointed Arab nationalism, Moslem fanaticism, and all the forces bred of individual discontent in Mesopotamia during and since the war, now combined to bring about the Mesopotamian rebellion. The first overt acts appeared in June 1920, when British officers were murdered; the rising reached its crisis during the later part of the summer; in the autumn it was subsiding.

This sharp and dangerous outbreak led His Majesty's Government to change the system of government. Towards the end of June they had issued a proclamation to the effect that Mesopotamia would be constituted an independent State under the guarantee of the League of Nations, and that due regard would be paid to the rights, wishes and interests of all communities of the country. In October 1920 Sir P. Cox was sent out to establish the new form of government, and give effect to the spirit in which His Majesty's Government regarded their responsibilities under the mandate. In March 1921 Mesopotamia passed to the control of the newly created Middle East Department of the Colonial Office.

The draft mandate for Mesopotamia was submitted by His Majesty's Government to the Council of the League of Nations early in December 1920, but met with objections and delay. The chief opposition came from the American Government and from Iraq. The former took exception to certain commercial provisions dealing with the "open door" and opportunities for sharing in the development of oil-fields. Iraq opposition was to the whole fact and principle of the mandate, as a system imposing on the country a Government that fell far short of the independence to which it was entitled.

What the Constitution of the Mesopotamian State should be was the next important question that presented itself for settlement. The Emir Feisal had deserved well of the Arab race, and had won at least the respect of Arab Nationalists in Mesopotamia. As a loyal ally during the war he deserved well of Great Britain, and after having been ejected from the throne of Syria he had avoided an attitude that might have been embarrassing to His Majesty's Government. These and other considerations marked him out a suitable candidate for the throne of Iraq under a constitutional monarchy. In June 1921 the Secretary of State for the Colonies announced that if Feisal was chosen King he would receive the support of His Majesty's Government. A referendum resulted in Feisal's favour—as far as the process was capable of expressing the wishes of the inhabitants of Iraq—and he ascended the throne on the 23rd August, 1921, having undertaken that his Government would be constitutional, representative and democratic.

On the 22nd October, 1922, a treaty was signed between the British and Iraqi Governments, to take the place of a mandate, subject to the approval of the League of Nations. It defined the duties His Majesty's Government assumed towards the young State; contemplated eventual League membership for Iraq; was to be submitted to the Constituent Assembly of Iraq; and was to remain in force for twenty years, but subject to review and revision. This period was reduced on the 24th March, 1924, to a maximum of four years from whatever date the Treaty of Peace with Turkey should be ratified.

The Constituent Assembly showed hostility to the treaty, but eventually voted acceptance of it early in June 1924, on two conditions, of which the chief was that His Majesty's Government should safeguard the "rights of Iraq in the Mosul Vilayet in its entirety." Having disposed of the treaty thus, the Constituent Assembly voted the Organic Law on the 10th July and the Electoral Law on the 2nd August. The treaty with Great Britain was ratified by King Feisal on the 12th December.

On the 7th September, 1924, the Council of the League gave its approval to a draft instrument submitted by His Majesty's Government embodying the agreements



so far made and ratified between Great Britain and Iraq. By these means a valid treaty of alliance approved by the League, a treaty defining the responsibilities assumed by Great Britain as mandatory towards Iraq, and the relations established between the two, took the place of the draft mandate.

The question of frontier between the Turkish Republic and Iraq now came up for settlement. On the day the Armistice of Mudros came into force the area occupied by British troops did not include the town of Mosul nor the northern three-fourths of the Turkish vilayet of that name. The greater part of this northern portion, including Mosul town, was subsequently occupied by British troops under sufficient authority reserved in the armistice. The imposed Treaty of Sèvres of the 10th August, 1920, defined the southern frontier of Turkey in a way that excluded the whole vilayet of Mosul from Turkey. By subsequent arrangement between Great Britain and France the vilayet was included in Iraq. Owing to resistance by the Turkish Nationalists, the Treaty of Sèvres was never ratified and remained inoperative. Meanwhile the Turkish National Assembly had adopted (in 1921) the unilateral declaration known as the National Pact, which, while in effect renouncing all territory occupied by Arabs, pledged the Turkish State and people to maintain possession of all territory, "whether within or without the Armistice Line," inhabited by a majority of Ottoman Moslems. After Mustafa Kemal Pasha and the Turkish Nationalist Army had ejected the Greeks from Asia Minor and reoccupied Eastern Thrace, only a negotiated peace with Turkey was possible.

When the question of the northern frontier of Iraq came up at the Conference of Lausanne, in January 1923, the Turkish representatives invoked the National Pact, claimed the whole of the vilayet as an area occupied by a majority of Ottoman Moslems, and refused to give way. The treaty as eventually signed at Lausanne provided that, failing a friendly arrangement between Turkey and Great Britain within a period of nine months, the frontier dispute should be referred to the League of Nations. Direct negotiations followed at Constantinople between a British and a Turkish delegation, but as they proved infructuous, the matter was duly referred to the League.

It is necessary to do no more here than record the result of the League's intervention. The position was that both Powers—Great Britain in her capacity as mandatory for Iraq—claimed the whole of the vilayet. The League's decision, given on the 16th December, 1925, assigned practically the entire vilayet to Iraq. But only on the condition that, by the conclusion of another treaty with Iraq, His Majesty's Government should continue as mandatory for twenty-five years, or until, within that period, Iraq was admitted to membership of the League. These conditions were accepted by His Majesty's Government, and the new Anglo-Iraqi treaty required by the League was concluded on the 13th January, 1926.

So far Turkey had not accepted, nor did she seem likely to accept, the League's award. But the whole dispute was brought to an amicable settlement by the conclusion, on the 5th June, 1926, of a treaty between Great Britain, Iraq and Turkey. Under this treaty certain slight readjustments of the frontier line laid down by the League were made to the benefit of Turkey, and she was granted the right to participate in any oil royalties the Government of Iraq might receive.

A further treaty was concluded with the Iraq Government in December 1927, but has not yet been ratified or become operative.

Chapter (8).—Persia (1918-28).

At the end of December 1918 His Majesty's Government decided that, as the magnitude of British interests involved forbade us allowing Persia to go to ruin, an agreement for the future should be discussed with the Persian Government. The points of the proposed agreement were settled by the Eastern Committee of the Cabinet immediately before the dissolution of that body on the 7th January, 1919. From this decision sprang the Anglo-Persian Agreement signed on the 9th August, 1919. The Government of India, it may be remarked, opposed the agreement as being an ambitious and hazardous experiment, likely to be opposed by Persian national sentiment as making for a protectorate, and likely to extend India's financial commitments.

Negotiations for the agreement were involved with Persia's demand to be represented at the Paris Conference. The danger presented itself that the Persian delegates to the conference might put forward claims inconsistent with the terms pro-



(19)

posed for the agreement. However, when the delegates reached Paris the conference refused to hear a statement of their case, and Persia was merely invited to become a member of the League of Nations.

The chief provisions of the Anglo-Persian Agreement were that—

> The British Government categorically reiterated their past undertakings to respect the independence and integrity of Persia; undertook to supply, at the cost of Persia, expert advisers for the several departments of the Persian Administration, and officers and modern munitions and equipment for the formation of a uniform force; undertook to provide Persia with a substantial loan; and undertook to co-operate with the Persian Government in encouraging Anglo-Persian enterprise in improving railway and road communications.

The agreement was not at first received with great hostility in Persia, although the French and Americans endeavoured to promote an agitation against it. But when His Majesty's Government decided to withdraw the British troops from the country, and Persia realised that she would have to face Russia all alone, its ratification by the Majlis became impossible.

Meanwhile, Bolshevik Russia had been a not disinterested spectator. During May 1920 Russian forces were landed at various points on the Persian coast of the Caspian, including Enzeli, where a British detachment was still in occupation. The British troops were withdrawn on the 31st May, and the Russians advanced to Resht. This Bolshevik military gesture directed against Great Britain and the agreement was followed, in February 1921, by a more striking political gesture. The Bolshevik Government concluded a treaty with Persia whereby Persia's debt to Russia was cancelled, Russian concessions in Persia for roads, railways and harbours were renounced, and a promise given to withdraw Russian troops.

The Persian Cossack Division, led now by Reza Khan, a Persian officer of the force professing himself a liberator, occupied Tehran on the 21st February, 1921. He overthrew the Government, and installed another under his nominee, Seyyid Zia, who lost no time in denouncing the Anglo-Persian Agreement.

When the Majlis met in June 1921 the Shah, in his opening speech, congratulated that body on the death of the Anglo-Persian Agreement. The Government now proceeded to expel British influence from Persia as far as they could. They got rid of British advisers, civil and military, granted oil concessions to American interests in provinces where a British company had purchased the Russian concessions, and again sought American financial advisers. The South Persia Rifles were disbanded.

From the *coup d'Etat* of the 21st February onward to the present time the actions of Reza Khan are the chief matters of interest relating to Persia. As author of the *coup d'Etat* Reza Khan's immediate reward was the position of Commander-in-chief of the Persian army. To this post was presently added the position of Minister of War. In this dual capacity he held office in a succession of Cabinets that served his purpose until, on the 28th October, 1923, he became Prime Minister. At this point the Shah, recognising that the new head of the Government was a man who regarded his career as only just beginning, left Persia on a visit to Europe.

On the 15th March, 1924, a meeting of Ministers, ex-Ministers and notables invited the Prime Minister to declare Persia a republic, in which the election of President would be vested in the Majlis. All was in train for the change, and public demonstrations in its favour were in progress, when the priestly or religious class took alarm. The Turkish National Assembly had just voted the abolition of the Caliphate, the disestablishment of Mahometanism as the State religion, and had confiscated to the secular needs of the State the revenues belonging to the Ministry of Pious Endowments. Furthermore, religious colleges and schools had been put under the Ministry of Education. These sudden and revolutionary changes had been effected by Turkey as a republic; it was feared, therefore, by the priestly class that Persia as a republic might follow a similar course.

They hastily organised anti-republican demonstrations, worked upon the religious feelings of the people, and on the day that the Majlis was to vote upon the proposed change that body was intimidated by a mob that surrounded the Chamber. The making of a republic had to be abandoned and another course shaped. Meanwhile, Reza Khan professed himself in full agreement with popular feeling. On the 1st April, 1924, he issued a proclamation declaring that the change to a republic

[15211] F



would be contrary to religion, and that, under penalty, the matter was to be discussed no more.

But on the 12th December, 1925, he was able to take the great step in the career he had marked out for himself. A Constituent Assembly, using the prolonged absence of the Shah as a reason, changed the Dynasty by removing from the Constitution the name of the Kajars and substituting that of the Pahlavis, thus vesting in Reza Khan Pahlavi and his heirs the crown of Persia. Reza Shah took the oath on the 15th March, and was crowned on the 25th April, 1926.

His first care after the *coup d'État* had been to provide himself with a sufficient and disciplined armed force. Three distinct military organisations had existed in Persia during the war: The Russian-officered Cossack Division in the north; the Swedish-officered gendarmerie as a national force under the Persian Government; and the British-officered—and paid—South Persia Rifles. Having rid himself of the Swedish and British officers, Reza Shah expanded these formations into a comparatively well-trained, armed, equipped and regularly-paid force of some 40,000 men. Provided now with adequate power, he set himself to restore the authority of the Central Government throughout Persia—to destroy the semi-independent position enjoyed by many of the chieftains for nearly a century.

Immediately after his *coup d'État* of 1921 he had dealt successfully with a rising in Khorasan headed by the military Governor of that province. He then turned to Kutchik Khan, the Jangali leader who had established himself in Resht. Kutchik Khan was crushed in October 1921. In January 1922 a rising of gendarmerie at Tabriz was suppressed after some difficulty and delay, as troops had to be sent from Central Persia. In the summer of 1922 Reza Khan was faced with the need for serious operations against the Persian Kurds, led by Simko, who obtained assistance from tribes in Luristan. The Kurdish leader was defeated and driven into Turkish territory the same year. In the spring of 1924 came the turn of the Lurs; but a general revolt of the Luristan tribes resulted in the defeat of the Government troops. Later in the summer, however, the resistance of the Lurs was broken and they submitted.

In thus reasserting the authority of the Central Government the most difficult problem of the kind had been left to the last. This was in the Province of Khuzistan, of which the highland portion was occupied chiefly by Bakhtiari tribes, and the lowland by Persian Arabs ruled by the Sheikh of Mohammerah. Over the Bakhtiari chiefs and the Sheikh of Mohammerah the Persian Government had only nominal authority. In these regions the situation was complicated by the facts that the oil-fields of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company lay in the territory of the Bakhtiaris, and the pipe-line to Abadan ran through that of the Sheikh of Mohammerah, and that chiefs and sheikh alike had agreements with the oil company, and the sheikh had received special assurances from His Majesty's Government. On these assurances more must be said in the chapter on Mohammerah. It suffices to record here that in 1924 Reza Khan threatened military operations to enforce the submission of Sheikh Khazal of Mohammerah to Persian authority. The sheikh tendered his submission on the 15th November, but Reza Khan demanded that it should be unconditional. Eventually the sheikh was arrested by Persian troops on the 19th April and removed to Tehran and constrained to live there in exile.

Although the Central Government at Tehran have not yet succeeded in extending their authority over Persian Baluchistan, and the tribes of Kurdistan and Luristan have never been entirely pacified, they had by the end of 1925 dominated the rest of Persia. Their recent attempts to assert claims to Persian sovereignty over the islands of the Gulf are obviously in continuation of the policy followed so successfully on the Persian mainland.



(19)

Chapter (9).—Arabia (1918-28).

After the conflict at Taraba (in May 1920) had established Ibn Saud's authority within the borderlands of Hejaz he was content to delay further active aggression in this quarter. He was still receiving a welcome British subsidy; he had the strongest political reasons for desiring a continuance of friendly relations with His Majesty's Government; he would have forfeited both if at this stage he had pressed his quarrel with King Hussein. He continued the process of Akhwan proselysation among the King's tribes, and turned to military conquest elsewhere for the purpose of rounding off his territory.

In 1920, therefore, he took and annexed Abha, the inland portion of Asir which lay outside the authority of the Idrisi. In 1921 he was ready, at last, to settle accounts with Ibn Rashid of Hail. Ibn Saud's campaign in Jebel Shammar during the summer left only Hail to be taken; that town surrendered in November, and the territory of the Rashids was annexed to Nejd.

Ibn Saud could now push northward. The southern and eastern boundaries of Transjordania were undefined; in order to reach the limit which sooner or later the British would impose on his expansion northward, Ibn Saud, in 1922, captured and annexed Jauf. Thereafter he was in contact with tribes more or less under British authority.

He now took the title of Sultan of Nejd.

At the end of March 1924 His Majesty's Government ceased to subsidise Ibn Saud. In the same month King Hussein assumed the Caliphate at Amman, the capital of Transjordania, where his son Abdullah was now established as ruler by the British. The cessation of the British subsidy left Ibn Saud free to act against Hejaz; the setting up of a Hashimite Caliphate provided him with a motive for taking that action quickly.

In June 1924 a proclamation to the Islamic world by Ibn Saud's son and heir rejected King Hussein's Caliphate and leadership of the Arab movement.

On the 20th August, 1924, Wahabi armies entered Hejaz; on the 3rd October King Hussein abdicated; on the 13th the Wahabis captured Mecca. In January 1926 Ibn Saud was proclaimed King of the Hejaz. He now was ruler of Arabia from the Gulf to the Red Sea, and from Yemen, Asir and the Great Desert, in the south, to Koweit, Iraq and Transjordania, in the north.

Meanwhile the uncertainty of boundaries between the territories of Ibn Saud and territories under British mandate or protection had led to conflicts on the borders—conflicts in which Wahabi aggression and the movement and custom of nomad tribes each played a part that was not always distinguishable. The necessity for laying down definite boundaries and providing for the exigencies of desert movement and custom became more and more pressing.

On the 5th May, 1922, the Treaty of Mohammerah was signed, under British auspices, between Nejd and Iraq. It provided for delimitation of the frontier, the use of grazing grounds and wells, and the restraint and punishment of tribal aggression.

On the same date another and somewhat similar agreement was signed between Nejd and Koweit.

In December 1923 a conference, at which His Majesty's Government, Ibn Saud, King Feisal of Iraq, and the Emir Abdullah of Transjordania were represented (and King Hussein had declined to attend), assembled at Koweit; but it broke down in the middle of April 1924.

In September 1925 His Majesty's Government sent Sir G. Clayton to Jeddah to negotiate with Ibn Saud regarding the frontiers between Nejd and Iraq and between Nejd and Transjordania. These negotiations resulted respectively in the "Bahrah" Agreement of the 1st November, 1925, and the "Haddah" Agreement of the following day. By these agreements the continuity of territory under mandate to Great Britain, from the Gulf to the Mediterranean, was secured, and a definite northern limit set to the expansion of Ibn Saud's domains.

Arming himself during the World War and using the power inherent in Wahabism, Ibn Saud, during the last twelve years, passed by the steps shown in this paper to the domination of three-fourths of Arabia. Throughout his whole career he has shown a solicitous regard for the maintenance of good relations with His Majesty's Government. Equally he has shown a clear perception of the limitations of his power if in opposition to His Majesty's Government. But, at the



same time, there is abundant proof that few can have excelled him in making or recognising an opportunity, and in using it to the greatest possible advantage for himself.

Chapter (10).—Mohammerah (1910-28).

The domain of the Sheikh of Mohammerah is the southern part of the Persian Province of Arabistan, or Khuzestan. Mohammerah itself had been in dispute between Turkey and Persia until 1847, when it was assigned to the latter Power by the Treaty of Erzerum. The Ruling Family was changed soon after 1858, and thereafter the Sheikhs of Mohammerah gradually acquired a position of privilege in which they were recognised as hereditary Governors of the country under Persian sovereignty.

The position of Mohammerah, on the left bank of the Shatt-el-Arab, and intersected by the navigable Karun River, brought the Sheikhs of Mohammerah into relations with Great Britain.

In April 1908 the sheikh approached His Majesty's Government for still closer relations, but was informed that His Majesty's Government had engaged to respect the integrity of Persia.

The discovery and working of the oil-field just outside the northern boundary of Mohammerah by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, and the construction of a pipe-line from the oil-field to the Shatt-el-Arab, across the territory of Mohammerah, led His Majesty's Government to extend their protection to the sheikh. In 1910 he received an assurance that His Majesty's Government would safeguard him to the best of their ability against unprovoked attack or encroachment by a foreign Power, and would support him to the extent of obtaining a satisfactory solution in the event of encroachment by the Persian Government on his jurisdiction and recognised rights, or on his property in Persia.

The boundary between Turkey and the territory of the Sheikh of Mohammerah was fixed by an agreement of the 29th July, 1913. A protocol signed on the 4th November, 1913, by Great Britain, Russia, Turkey and Persia laid down the whole Turco-Persian frontier from the Gulf to Mt. Ararat. Early in 1914 the frontier was delimited.

In November 1914, after Sheikh Khazal of Mohammerah had sided with Great Britain in the war and assisted the British Expeditionary Force in capturing Basra, His Majesty's Government renewed the assurance to him of 1910, and extended it to include his heirs and successors.

In 1922 a request from the sheikh for arms and munitions, ostensibly for defence of himself and Anglo-Persion Oil Company's property, was refused by His Majesty's Government. It was believed that the arms were intended for eventual use against the Persian Government.

Towards the end of 1922 His Majesty's Minister at Tehran urged the sheikh to avoid action that could be interpreted by the Central Government as indicating hostility.

In November 1923 the sheikh came to terms with the American financial advisers of the Persian Government on the question of taxes payable by him to Tehran. But, though pressed by His Majesty's Government to settle the arrears, he delayed to do so.

In the summer of 1924 the sheikh was alarmed by Reza Khan's operations against the rebellious Lurs, and by the report that the Government intended to cancel the *firmans* on which his *status* legally depended. On this point he was reassured by the Persian Government. But, still fearing for his position, he took the false step of joining the tribes in rebellion at least to the extent of publicly denouncing Reza Khan and his policy. Thereupon Persian troops were sent to Mohammerah. On British advice the sheikh tendered his submission and an apology. In view of the threatening attitude of the Persian Government, details of our assurances to the sheikh were handed to the Persian Government, but the notes containing them were withdrawn in order not to prejudice an amicable settlement with the sheikh.

On the 6th December, 1924, a settlement was reached between the Persian Prime Minister, the Sheikh of Mohammerah and His Majesty's Minister at Tehran. Under it, the sheikh received a free pardon for his contumacious acts and a personal assurance of Reza Khan's protection. But the settlement also provided for a military Government to be temporarily established in the Province of Khuzestan, which province was thereby brought under the direct control of the Tehran Government. Reza Khan also promised to review the whole position in Southern Arabistan in the spring (1925).



The question of the sheikh's properties now arose, and made it desirable for him to go to Tehran. In a despatch of the 3rd April, 1925, the British Minister at Tehran wrote :—

> "I am hopeful that if the sheikh can be persuaded to come to Tehran the matter of his properties can be settled to his satisfaction. His Majesty's Government may then consider that their written assurances to his Excellency might suitably and honourably be allowed to lapse, and the duty of protecting him passed on to the Persian Government. This would be a very welcome result, and one which we should, in my opinion, strive earnestly to achieve."

The sheikh rejected Sir P. Loraine's advice of voluntarily proceeding to Tehran, and announced his intention of going to reside for a time at Basra. Reza Khan, however, was determined that he should be brought to Tehran. He thereupon caused the sheikh to be arrested at Mohammerah on the 19th April, 1925, and conveyed to the capital under escort. Reza Khan explained his motives in taking this course to Sir P. Loraine, who considered that he had made out a good case.

The sheikh reached Tehran on the 10th May, 1925; soon afterwards a representative of His Majesty's Minister was refused access to the sheikh. For this slight His Majesty's Minister demanded and received from Reza Khan a written apology, "in order to uphold not only British dignity, but also the British position in regard to the Sheikh of Mohammerah."

In a statement made in the House of Lords on the 25th May, 1925, Lord Balfour said that the sheikh "had not been treated as a Prince by His Majesty's Government," and "had always been under the suzerainty of Persia."

Despite continued representations by His Majesty's Government and repeated assurances as to an early settlement by the Persian Government, nothing has yet been achieved in regard to the sheikh's affairs. His property is in the hands of the Persian authorities; he has been deprived of his revenues; and he is himself detained at Tehran.

W. J. CHILDS.

Foreign Office, October 12, 1928.





"ملخص تاريخي للأحداث في أراضي الإمبراطورية العثمانية، فارس وشبه الجزيرة العربية التي تؤثر على الموقف البريطاني في الخليج الفارسي، ١٩٠٧-١٩٢٨" [٢١و] (١٨٨/٤٨)

(21)

Political Control in the Persian Gulf.

(Communicated by India Office and revised to 5th October 1928.)

Arrangements prior to 1921.

The first association of His Majesty's Government with the Persian Gulf is the establishment by the East India Company, in 1616, of the Factory at Jashk; and from that date until a very recent period the local interests of His Majesty's Government are substantially those of, or in the hands of, the Company and its agents. The date from which those agents can properly be spoken of as exercising political control is difficult to fix precisely; but it is not unreasonable to select, in an unbroken occupation of stations in the Gulf from 1616 onwards, the year 1763, when British headquarters were moved from Bander Abbas to Basra and the Bushire Residency was established. During the century and a half between that date and 1921, political control in the Persian Gulf was exercised (with considerable intervals ending in 1873 during which responsibility rested with the Government of Bombay) by the Government of India on behalf of His Majesty's Government; and from 1824 onwards that control was concentrated in the hands of an officer in Indian Government service known as the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, who since 1878 held in addition His Majesty's Commission as Consul-General for the provinces of Fars, Khuzistan and Laristan, and the district of Lingah, and for the coasts and islands of the Persian Gulf being within the dominions of Persia. This official *qua* Political Resident was under the Indian Government, but *qua* Consul-General under the Foreign Office. The cost of his establishment was divided between the British and Indian Exchequers, and his headquarters were at Bushire. His judicial powers and extra-territorial jurisdiction as Consul-General were and are exercised by virtue of the Persian Coast and Islands Order in Council, first approved by Her Majesty in Council in 1889, and since that date substantially modified from time to time.

Lor. [illegible]

Lor. [illegible]

Lor., I, [illegible]

Lor., II, p. [illegible]

Lor. II, [illegible]

2. Subordinate to the Resident in his political capacity, for which he was, prior to the War, solely responsible to the Government of India, were the representatives of the Indian Government (officers of the Indian Political Department) in Muscat,* the Trucial States, Bahrein† and Koweit,† and through these officers he exercised an undefined but considerable influence upon the political affairs of the States in question. On the Consular side, the Resident, in his capacity as Consul-General, had control of certain inland Consulates in South Persia.

* (Also holding H.M. Commission as Consul at Muscat, and exercising jurisdiction, subject to the Pol. Res., under the Muscat Order in Council of 1915.)

† (Exercising jurisdiction, subject to the Pol. Res., under the Bahrein and Koweit Orders in Council.)

Arrangements since the Report of the Masterton-Smith Committee, 1921.

3. The question of redistribution as between His Majesty's Government and the Government of India of political responsibility in the Persian Gulf appears to have been tentatively under consideration in the years before the War, but, partly, no doubt, because of the desirability of reaching a comprehensive understanding with Turkey on the limits of British and Turkish interests in the Gulf, no decision had been reached in 1914. The pre-war system, the maintenance of which was the subject of considerable discussion from time to time during the War, continued in force until 1921. In that year the Masterton-Smith Committee, the conclusions of which were accepted generally, subject to the approval of the Government of India, by His Majesty's Government, recommended that henceforth the control of policy as affecting the Arabian littoral of the Persian Gulf should be transferred to His Majesty's Government and exercised through the Middle Eastern Department of the Colonial Office; that the functions on that littoral of the Government of India should be confined to administrative and local matters, the prior concurrence of the Colonial Office being obtained by them to any measures of political significance, and that the relations of His Majesty's Government with Ibn Saud (as Sultan of Nejd) should be conducted exclusively by the new Middle Eastern Department. The channel of control in all cases was to be the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf

Cf. para. 12 of Masterton-Smith Committee's Report



"ملخص تاريخي للأحداث في أراضي الإمبراطورية العثمانية، فارس وشبه الجزيرة العربية التي تؤثر على الموقف البريطاني في الخليج الفارسي، ١٩٠٧-١٩٢٨" [٢١ظ] (١٨٨/٤٩)

and His Majesty's Consul-General, Bushire, who was, as hitherto, to be found from the service of the Government of India. The position of the Resident *vis-à-vis* the Government of India on the Persian littoral of the Gulf (in which area he had, of course, at all times worked in very close relations with His Majesty's Minister at Tehran) and in Muscat, remained unaffected.

* Para. 2 of C.O. Desp. 13 to Pol. Res., April 15 1924, P. 1466/24.

4. While the formal concurrence of the Government of India in the recommendations of the Masterton-Smith* Committee has not been given owing to the necessity of disposing of the connected question of Aden, they have agreed to work provisionally on the lines which the Committee recommended, and it may be said that, broadly speaking, the arrangements approved by the Masterton-Smith Committee, so far as division of responsibility was concerned, have been in operation since 1921. Some discussion took place in 1922–3 on the question whether communications with Ibn Saud should take place through the Political Agent, Bahrein, rather than through the Political Resident at Bushire. The arrangement finally reached between the Colonial Office and India Office was that communications from His Majesty's Government as regards, and with, **Ibn Saud and Nejd** when sent through the Persian Gulf should pass through the Political Resident except in cases of a wholly exceptional character and of very great urgency; that the same should hold good in the case of **Koweit** (the internal administration and affairs of which were to remain a matter for the Government of India); that in the case of **Bahrein**, the India Office should continue to be the normal channel for the communication of the instructions of His Majesty's Government on matters of policy; that orders on a question involving both relations with Ibn Saud and local action or interests in Bahrein, should be prepared in consultation between the India Office and Colonial Office and should issue (probably) through the India Office to the Resident, but that in circumstances of a wholly exceptional character, the Colonial Office might communicate direct with the officers subordinate to the Resident who were in direct contact with Ibn Saud and the Sheikh of Koweit; and on a minor point, that questions affecting the development of the oil resources of the Arab littoral should for convenience be dealt with exclusively by the Colonial Office. The position as regards the **Trucial Sheikhs and the Islands in the Gulf** under the suzerainty of those Sheikhs has not been precisely defined, but, broadly speaking, it would seem to be similar to that in the case of Bahrein, and in dealing with the recent incident at Tamb the instructions of His Majesty's Government were communicated to the Political Resident through the India Office and the Government of India.

Paras. 4 and 5 of C.O. Desp. 13 to Pol. Res., April 15 1924, P. 1466/24.

I.O. to C.O., May 28 1923, P. 1780.
C.O. to I.O., June 7 1923, P. 2171.
C.O. to I.O., Mar. 24 1924, P. 1441.

5. The general effect of these arrangements is that the Political Resident is directly responsible to, and corresponds directly with, His Majesty's Government (as represented by the **Colonial Office**) on questions affecting Ibn Saud, except when he is in the Hejaz, and the political aspects of the Arab littoral of the Gulf; that he is directly responsible in his capacity as Consul-General, Bushire, to the **Foreign Office**; and acts as a liaison between the Minister at Tehran and affairs in the Gulf which are of interest to His Majesty's Government as affecting their relations with Persia; that he is directly responsible to the **Government of India** for the internal affairs of the various States on the Arab littoral, for Bahrein, the Trucial Sheikhdoms, and Muscat, and for keeping them in touch both with affairs generally in South Persia and the Gulf, and with developments *vis-à-vis* Persia in that area, which, from the large Indian interests represented in it and its strategic importance, is of the first importance from the standpoint of the Government of India. The responsibility for co-ordinating action in times of stress in the Gulf inevitably and naturally falls on the Political Resident, who is alone sufficiently closely in permanent touch with the political, strategic and commercial interests involved adequately to discharge this function, and on whom accordingly the immediate responsibility must fall, in consultation with the Air Officer Commanding, Iraq, the Senior Naval Officer, Persian Gulf, or the Government of India as the case may be, for a decision as to the points at which the assistance of naval, military or air units should be asked from the appropriate naval or air authority, or from the Government of India.



(22)

Persia and the maintenance of a "Political Resident" (as distinct from Consul-General) at Bushire.

6. A minor but connected question may conveniently be dealt with in this connection. Since 1878, as will be seen from para. 1 above, the British representative at Bushire has discharged Consular functions, and has borne, in addition to the title "Political Resident," which dates from as early as 1824, the title "Consul-General." *Qua* Political Resident on the Persian littoral of the Gulf, his functions appear now to be almost negligible, but he still performs important duties in that capacity in respect of the Arab littoral from his headquarters at Bushire or Shiraz. In the last few months Persia has shown indications of a disposition to recognise and refer to the British representative as Consul-General only, while the presence of a flagstaff in the grounds of the Residency at Bushire appears recently to have roused the suspicions of the Persian Minister of Finance.

It is, perhaps, improbable that the title of the British representative, or the fact that functions in respect of the Arab shore are discharged by him from a headquarters in Persian territory, will be raised by Persia in the course of the forthcoming negotiations, but, in view of her present attitude, it may be placed on record that the title, and the appointment, of Resident were specifically recognised by Persia thirty-seven years before the creation of a Consulate-General at Bushire in Article 2 of the Commercial Treaty with Great Britain of 1841 (". . . . as for a series of years a Resident of the British Government has resided at Bushire, the Persian Government grants permission that the said Resident shall reside there as heretofore, and in like manner two [Persian] Commercial Agents shall reside in . . . . London and . . . Bombay"), and that there is no record over the period since 1841 of any Persian objection to the existing arrangement.

Aitchison, Vol. XIII, 41.





MUSCAT: 1908-1928.

(Communicated by India Office and revised to 25th August 1928.)

I.—Administration.

1. His Highness Saiyid Taimur bin Faisal bin Turki, K.C.I.E. (1926), C.S.I. (1917), Sultan of Muscat and Oman, born in 1885, succeeded his father, Sultan Saiyid Faisal-bin-Turki, G.C.I.E., who had ruled the Sultanate since 1888, in 1913. He has three sons, of whom the eldest, Saiyid Said, is being educated at an Arab school in Baghdad. His Highness, who is entitled to a salute of 21 guns, represented his father at the Delhi Durbar, 1902–3, and visited England in the summer of 1928, when he was received in audience by the King, and entertained as a State guest for a period of a month.

2. The Sultan is an independent potentate who has commercial treaties with the Governments of France (1844) and the United States (1833), as well as with His Majesty's Government. There is in addition a commercial declaration of 1877 with the Dutch Government. Under the Anglo-French declaration of 1862, His Majesty's Government and the French Government engage reciprocally to respect the independence of the Sultan of Muscat (as of the Sultan of Zanzibar). Under his treaty relations with His Majesty's Government, a précis of which is contained in the memorandum printed as an Appendix on page 168, the Sultan is pledged never to cede, sell, mortgage, or otherwise give for occupation, his dominions, save to His Majesty's Government, to whom, in addition, the right to search and seize Muscat ships suspected of carrying slaves was ceded in 1873, as was the right (simultaneously ceded to Persia) to search Muscat vessels for arms in Muscat waters in 1898. The right to search Muscat vessels for arms on the high seas was ceded to His Majesty's Government and the Italian Government in 1903. His Highness has further undertaken not to grant oil concessions without the approval of His Majesty's Government. While, however, the Sultan is in theory a wholly independent ruler, since the end of the eighteenth century British influence has been predominant in Muscat, and in practice the relations which obtain between its ruler and His Majesty's Government and the Government of India very closely approximate to those which obtain between the Government of India and an Indian State under the suzerainty of His Majesty.

3. The internal administration of Muscat is carried out by an Advisory Council of Ministers (President, Minister of Finance, Minister of Religious Affairs, Minister of Justice),* purely Arab with the exception noted below, presided over by His Highness's brother, Saiyid Nadir.† The Council, which the Sultan was required to institute in 1920 as a condition of the assistance of His Majesty's Government in the reconstruction of his administration and in negotiations with the rebel Omani tribes (see para. 35), is entitled to a salute of 17 guns, individual members receiving five and the President nine, or 13 if a member of the ruling House. In theory it exercises all ordinary powers of administration, not only during the absence, but during the presence of the Sultan at Muscat, subject to the retention by His Highness of power to decide all matters of extraordinary importance affecting the interests of his State or his dynasty.‡ It does not, however, appear in the past to have exercised in practice a very effective control. At the request of the Sultan, an Englishman, Mr. B. S. Thomas, O.B.E., formerly assistant British representative in Trans-Jordan,§ was appointed in 1925 as Financial Adviser. In 1926 Mr. Thomas was appointed Wazir and a member of the Muscat Council, functioning as Finance Minister, but having also a full share in the government of the State. The result has been a marked improvement in the general level of efficiency of administration.

4. His Majesty's Government and the Government of India are represented in Muscat by the Political Agent, who is an officer of the Indian Political Department, on the cadre of which the appointment is borne. The

* P. 837/21.

† Letter 183 S. from Pol. Res. to G. of I., April 24 1926. P. 2077/26.

‡ G. of I. Desp. to S. of S. for I., Mar. 31 1921. P. 1969/21.

§ Letter 418 S. from Pol. Res. to G. of I., July 29 1924.



post, which is at present held by Major G. P. Murphy, Indian Army, has been maintained without interruption since its revival* after the separation of Muscat from Zanzibar in 1861. In 1869 it was placed in strict subordination to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.† Since 1867 the Political Agent has also held His Majesty's Commission as Consul for Muscat. Under the Muscat Order in Council of 1915 (see paras. 63-4 below), which replaced the Muscat Order in Council of 1867, the Political Agent is the District Magistrate and Sessions Judge, and exercises his powers subject to the jurisdiction of the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf. The limits of the Order are co-extensive with the territories and territorial waters of the Sultan of Muscat and Oman.

* Lor. I, 471.

† Lor. I, 444-6.

5. No specific reference was made to Muscat in the Report of the Masterton-Smith Committee, and while, under the general principle embodied in that Committee, matters of political significance on the north Arabian littoral which may affect relations with Ibn Saud fall to be dealt with by or in consultation with the Colonial Office, such matters rarely, if at all, arise in Muscat, and political control may in consequence be regarded as resting, as in the pre-war period, with the Government of India, subject to the general control of His Majesty's Government. Under the principles embodied in the Masterton-Smith Report, the internal affairs of the State are in any event the direct concern of the Government of India.

6. With the inconsiderable exception referred to below, expenditure in Muscat is wholly borne by Indian revenues. That expenditure consists of subsidies to the Sultan, of Durbar presents, and of the cost of maintaining the Political Agency. The subsidies consist of an annual sum of Rs. 86,400, representing the $40,000 payable by Zanzibar to Muscat under the Canning award of 1861 (liability for this payment was assumed by His Majesty's Government in 1871, and has since 1st September 1883 been wholly an Indian charge),‡ and of the annual subsidy of Rs. 1 lakh paid since 1912 (see paras. 12 and 22 below) in compensation for the losses to the Sultan arising out of the suppression of the arms traffic, which will cease with the tenure of power by the present Sultan. These charges are fixed, and their amount does not vary. In the latest year for which authoritative figures are available (1919-20), the cost of the Political Agency was Rs. 78,427, and in the same year Durbar presents amounted to Rs. 5,000.§ The solitary item of expenditure shared with His Majesty's Government is a yearly payment in respect of anti-slavery measures, the amount of which in 1926 was Rs. 73.

‡ Lor. I, 439-[illegible], 442-3.

§ Sir D. Bray to Mr. [illegible], [illegible] 1918, E.A., July 21 1921, P. [illegible]

II.—1908 to 4th October 1913: Sultan Faisal.

6. The dominating feature of the period between 1908 and 1913 is the successful suppression, in agreement with the Sultan of Muscat, of the arms traffic from his State, and no other question of sufficiently general interest to call for reference in this Memorandum arose in the closing years of the reign of Sultan Faisal. The rebellion of the Omani tribes, which broke out some months before his death on 4th October 1913, belongs principally to the reign of his successor. It is dealt with in a separate section in paras. 43 to 52 below.

The Suppression of the Arms Traffic from Muscat.

7. At the beginning of the period a general prohibition of the arms traffic was in force on the Persian Gulf littoral save in Muscat. The Sultan of Muscat had prohibited in 1891 the import or export of arms and ammunition to or from Gwadur, his dependency on the Persian littoral of the Gulf. In 1898 His Highness had agreed to prohibit the export of arms from Muscat to India and Persia (where the import of arms was illegal), and had empowered Persia and Great Britain to act on his behalf by sea in enforcing this prohibition within Muscat territorial waters. In 1903 he had further agreed to the search by British and Italian ships of Muscat vessels on the high seas suspected of carrying arms. But the import of arms into Muscat, and their export, except to India and Persia, were still unprohibited in 1908.



8. The result was to make Muscat the recognised centre of the trade in arms for the whole Middle East. At the beginning of the period now in question, the main channel of distribution was from Muscat across the Gulf to the coast of Persian Makran, whence arms were taken up country by caravans, ultimately reaching the tribesmen of Afghanistan and the North-West Frontier of India. From 1910–11, the stringency of the prohibitive measures imposed by His Majesty's Government led to the adoption, in preference, of smuggling to El Katr, on the Arabian coast, then still under Turkish control, and thence across the Gulf to the Persian coast of Laristan.

I.O. Memo. B. 173, 192, 156.

9. The constant flow of modern arms of precision from Muscat to the North-West Frontier of India created a very serious situation for the Government of India and His Majesty's Government. The situation was one which could be dealt with adequately only by the suppression of the free trade in arms at Muscat. The fact that the Sultan had commercial treaties not only with His Majesty's Government, but with the United States of America and France, which expressly provided for the unrestricted import and export of all kinds of merchandise (with certain specified exceptions); that he had further a commercial declaration which provided for reciprocal most-favoured-nation treatment between Muscat and Holland; that a large part of the trade in arms was in the hands of certain French firms with considerable political influence in the Chamber; and that the French Government, unlike the Governments of the United States of America and Holland, was not prepared to sacrifice its treaty rights provided other Treaty Powers did the same, made it extremely difficult to take effective steps to this end.

10. The efforts made by His Majesty's Government to provide a *quid pro quo* acceptable to the French Government having failed, steps were taken, in the light of a reiteration at the Brussels Arms Conference of 1908–9 of the refusal of France to modify her attitude, to suppress the traffic so far as was practicable without the violation of existing treaty rights. Towards the end of 1909 a naval blockade was instituted, which was still in being on the outbreak of the War in 1914, but which, though it met with very considerable success, proved extremely costly. Between 1910 and 1912 further lengthy negotiations took place in consequence with the French Government and with the Sultan. The Sultan, who saw in the suppression of the traffic not merely a possible occasion of immediate compensation from His Majesty's Government, but the closing of the most convenient source from which the rebellious tribes in the interior of Oman could arm themselves against him, was generally amenable, though in 1911–12 his financial difficulties, which delivered him into the hands of the arms dealers,* led him for a time to change from an attitude of neutrality towards the trade, to active, if surreptitious, participation in it. The French Government, however, remained unyielding, and in view of the complete failure of the negotiations with them, it was decided to disregard France, and to endeavour to concert with the Sultan of Muscat some local arrangements for a satisfactory control of the trade.†

* Cp. tel. from Viceroy to S. of S. for I., Jan. 14 1911, P. 171, P. 396.

† I.O. to F.O., July 19 1911.

11. It is unnecessary to recapitulate the various incidents which took place in connection with the suppression of the traffic between 1910 and 1912, or to enter into details of the discussions which took place during that period with the Sultan and with France. Suffice it to say that, after lengthy negotiation, an arrangement was finally reached with His Highness in May 1912. Under this the Sultan agreed to establish at Muscat a bonded warehouse under sufficient control, in which all arms and ammunition would be deposited on importation, the warehouse to be in charge of a trustworthy person from among his subjects. All issues from the warehouse would be regulated by special licences prepared by the Superintendent and countersigned by the Sultan personally, and such licences would be issued only to individual purchasers or their authorised agents subject to satisfactory proof that the issue involved was "free from justifiable objection." Licences would not be issuable to traders.

12. The terms on which the Sultan agreed to this settlement were as follows. He was to receive as compensation an immediate lump sum



payment of 1 lakh of rupees, together with 1 lakh of rupees per annum in the future, paid monthly in advance. In addition he was to receive compensation for certain specific losses in 1909 and 1911. The Sultan was further guaranteed that His Majesty's Government would give him all the necessary support to dispose of objections that might ensue from France or other Powers; that no right was given by the arrangement to His Majesty's Government or their officials to take action in his territories any more than in the past; and that a friendly understanding should be reached with him by His Majesty's Government as to suitable arrangements for the supply of the *bonâ fide* needs of his administration and his subjects.

13. The arrangement, which was to come into force, after three months' notice, on the 1st September 1912, was published on the 4th June 1912, came into operation on the appointed date, and was subsequently maintained with complete success.

14. Very serious difficulty immediately arose with the French Government, which expressed its readiness to approve the regulations only subject to the compensation of the French merchants, who had hitherto played a considerable part in the arms trade. Compensation to French interests would have meant compensation to the other interests—Muscat, British, German, Belgian—affected, and the objections to it from the standpoint of His Majesty's Government were overwhelming. The fact that England, while a joint guarantor with France of Muscat independence under the Agreement with France of 1862, was not a party to the French Treaty of 1844 with Muscat, under which the arms trade was permissible, further complicated the issue.

15. His Majesty's Government, however, made it clear to the French Government on the 14th September 1912, that they were firmly determined to support the Sultan in maintaining the regulations, which, they stated, in their view did not infringe French treaty rights, but merely regulated a dangerous trade, a right enjoyed by every Government. They added that, while compensation without arbitration could not be admitted, as His Majesty's Government did not recognise that French rights were infringed, they were prepared to submit the question to arbitration.

16. After lengthy and difficult negotiations, which lasted until the early part of 1914, the French Government agreed* to recognise the regulations in force at Muscat, and the right of the Sultan to amend those regulations with the concurrence of His Majesty's Government, if His Majesty's Government, in direct negotiation with the French trade interests affected, could arrive at an agreement as to the terms on which those interests should be bought out. An agreement having been reached,† under which £64,495 was paid by His Majesty's Government to the interested firms, an exchange of notes took place on 4th February 1914, by the settlement embodied in which the French Government undertook "no longer to claim for their nationals the privileges and immunities secured under the Treaty between France and Muscat of 1844, in so far as those privileges and immunities conflict with the regulations for the prevention of the illicit trade in arms and ammunition in the Sultanate. In other respects the Treaty of 1844 remains in force." The expenditure involved was divided equally between Indian and Imperial revenues.‡ It was decided that no compensation should be paid to British firms affected.

17. While a continual vigilance is called for, the steps taken to put a stop to the arms traffic from Muscat, as described above, have been completely successful. In 1921,§ and again in 1925,|| the Political Resident was able to report that, save for the Batineh coast, on which a truculent Omani tribe (the Yal Saad) are not under the Sultan's effective control (*cf.* para. 52), Muscat had entirely fallen out of the arms traffic; and the fact that under the post-war Arms Traffic Convention, to which the Sultan has adhered at the request of His Majesty's Government,¶ Arabia had been made a prohibited area for the import or export of arms, has for practical purposes disposed of the probability of the recurrence in present circumstances of international difficulties.

* P. [illegible]/13.

† P. [illegible]/13.

P. [illegible]/14.

‡ F.O. to I.O., Dec. [illegible] P. [illegible]

§ Report of Arms Traffic Committee, 1921, P. [illegible]/21.

|| Pol. Res. to S. of S. for I., [illegible] 1925. P. [illegible]

¶ F.O. to I.O., Dec. [illegible] P. [illegible]



(25)

III.—Internal History of Muscat from Accession of Sultan Taimur, 4th October 1913 to 1928.

18. Sultan Faisal died on 4th October 1913.* His son, Saiyid Taimur, had in practice, if not formally, for some years previously been recognised as heir apparent,† and while His Majesty's Government had in the past in Muscat postponed recognition of a successor until they were satisfied that a particular claimant was assured of the general support of the more important elements and could be regarded as the *de facto* ruler, the demise of the late Sultan at a time when the interior was in a state of revolt, the urgent necessity of establishing a fresh administrative centre, and the fact that Saiyid Taimur was familiar with the policy of his predecessor, and could probably be relied upon to follow that policy in the vital matter of the arms traffic, decided them in favour of his immediate recognition.‡ This the Political Agent was authorised to convey to the Saiyid in November 1913. The French Government, who had suggested that the two Governments *reconnaissent en même temps* the new ruler,§ were informed that while His Majesty's Government, as they had already indicated, adhered to the Declaration of 1862, it was their usual practice to recognise the *de facto* ruler, and that they had accordingly already authorised the Government of India to take this step in the case of Sultan Taimur, especially as they understood that the French Consul at Muscat only awaited the receipt of instructions by his British colleague himself to accord official recognition on behalf of France.

19. But the recognition had not been unconditional. The new Sultan had been required as a prior condition to state that he accepted all the obligations which his father bore towards His Majesty's Government, and that in regard to the arms traffic as well as other matters he intended to pursue his father's policy, and undertook "to be guided by our advice in all important matters."‖ And, immediate recognition having been granted by His Majesty's Government on compliance by the Saiyid with these preliminary demands, further requirements were presented to him as a condition of the continuance of the subsidies granted to his predecessor.

20. Of these subsidies the Zanzibar subsidy was one the precise conditions antecedent to the grant of which are a matter of some dispute.¶ It would, however, appear that these conditions are that a Sultan should be acknowledged by His Majesty's Government and should promise friendship and the maintenance of his treaty obligations, and that subject to this he might prefer an absolute claim. The arms traffic subsidy of Rs. 1 lakh per annum had, however, been personal to Sultan Feisal, and, while it was essential that the new ruler should afford the co-operation in the suppression of the trade to secure which it had been granted, he could prefer no claim to it as of right.

21. After lengthy discussion between the Government of India, the India Office and the Foreign Office, it was finally decided that the Sultan should be required as a condition of the regrant of the subsidies to agree to postpone for five years, or such shorter period as His Majesty's Government might desire, the revision of the Commercial Treaty of 1891**; a decision being deferred pending further examination on two connected questions—the assent of His Highness to the establishment of a Muscat Levy Corps, and his agreement to conclude no further treaties with foreign Powers without the consent of His Majesty's Government. The second of these questions was one which had arisen towards the close of the reign of Sultan Faisal††, the disposal of which presented political difficulties owing to the position of France *vis-à-vis* the State, and which was still under examination when the outbreak of the European War in August 1914 made its immediate pursuit unnecessary.‡‡ It has not been revived. For various reasons the proposal to raise a Muscat Levy Corps (to which the Foreign Office saw no political objection in 1914§§ so long as the force was nominally a Muscat force and commanded by officers nominally in the service of the Sultan) produced no result until 1921 (see para. 31).

22. The arms traffic subsidy was renewed without a very clear definition of the terms of its renewal, though the intention both of His Majesty's

* P. [illegible]/13.

† Tel. from Viceroy to S. of S. for I., Oct. [illegible] 1913, P. [illegible]/13.

‡ F.O. to I.O., Oct. [illegible] 1913, P. [illegible].

§ M. Cambon to Sir E. Grey, Nov. [illegible] 1913, P. [illegible]/13.

F.O. to I.O., Nov. [illegible] 1913, P. [illegible].

‖ Tel. from Viceroy, Dec. [illegible] 1913, P. [illegible].

¶ Cf. Lee I, p. [illegible], footnote.

** I.O. to F.O., Dec. 31 1913; tel. to Viceroy, Jan. 17 1914, P. [illegible]/13, [illegible]/14.

†† I.O. to F.O., July [illegible] 1911; F.O. to I.O., Jan. [illegible] 1914, P. [illegible].

‡‡ F.O. to I.O., Dec. [illegible] 1914, P. [illegible]/14.

§§ F.O. to I.O., Jan. [illegible] 1914, P. [illegible]/14.



Government and the Government of India had been that, as in the case of Sultan Feisal, it should be personal to the ruler.* The complete success of the restrictions imposed on the arms traffic, the extension to Arabia of the Arms Traffic Convention of 1919, and the financial stringency of the post-war period, led at a later stage to re-examination of the position in regard to this subsidy, and as a result the Sultan was warned in 1922 that, while it would be continued to him during his tenure of power, it would not be admissible to his successor. In this decision His Highness reluctantly acquiesced.

* Pol. Agent to Pol. Res., May 29 1921, P. 4168/21.

23. The dominating position in Muscat throughout the war was the rebellion of the Omani tribes, which Sultan Taimur inherited as a legacy from his predecessor, which he found himself unable to quell on his accession, and the history of which is separately dealt with in paras. 43 to 52 of this Memorandum. The pre-occupation of the State with this problem absorbed its energies during the War period, while its relative remoteness from the politics of Central Arabia resulted in its isolation from the disputes of Ibn Saud and Ibn Rashid, and from the development of events alike at the head of the Gulf and on the coast of the Red Sea.

24. It is unnecessary to enter in any detail into the internal affairs of Muscat (as distinct from the Omani rebellion) in the early years of the war. The control of the arms traffic, itself no inconsiderable element in that rebellion, was on the whole satisfactorily maintained. But the Sultan retained his throne thanks only to the active military assistance and support of His Majesty's Government, a support not extended to the administration of his State until 1918; his administration, never distinguished, became hopelessly corrupt; while His Highness's financial position, as the result of the inefficiency of his servants, the demands of the campaign against the Omanis, and the loss of revenue involved in the Omani rebellion, gradually deteriorated until in 1918 it could be described as desperate.†

† P. 378/18.

25. The Government of India and His Majesty's Government, committed by their undertakings of 1895 and 1913 to secure the safety of the coast towns of Muscat and Muttrah (cp. para. 45), in the early part of the war confined their action to implementing these undertakings with some generosity of interpretation, and abstained from interference in the internal policy of the State. But the inefficiency of the internal administration, the action taken at the behests of His Majesty's Government by the Sultan and his predecessor, and the Omani rebellion were closely interwoven; the strategic position of Muscat, athwart the main route to the headwaters of the Gulf and to Mesopotamia, was of vital interest; the nominal independence of the Sultan rendered his situation of more than local importance, and in 1917 the then Political Agent, Major Haworth, submitted for consideration a programme the acceptance of which would involve active interference in the internal affairs of Muscat by the Government of India and His Majesty's Government.

26. The proposals of the Political Agent were that a levy corps should be established under British officers; that a loan should be granted the Sultan sufficient to rid him of his liabilities; and that as a condition of the loan His Highness should agree to the transfer to British control of the Muscat customs, to the appointment of a British adviser and to the establishment of an educational system the ultimate result of which would be the provision of a nucleus of Muscat subjects educationally qualified for employment in the local administration, which had hitherto been wholly dependent on alien talent.

27. Major Haworth's proposals necessitated careful consideration in the light of the Declaration of 1862, under which His Majesty's Government had become a joint guarantor with France of the independence of Muscat. A further difficulty was the uncertainty as to the authority with which responsibility for Muscat affairs would rest after the war, and the reluctance of the Government of India to initiate a policy the development of which was unlikely to rest with them. But circumstances forced the pace: negotiations with the Omani rebels in the spring of 1918 were unproductive, the financial



situation became, if possible, more critical; the reactions of maladministration at home, alike on the financial situation and on relations with the tribes of the interior, became increasingly apparent; and in August 1918 the Government of India, after further discussion with Sir Percy Cox and Major Haworth, expressed to the Secretary of State for India the view that action could not be postponed indefinitely, and submitted proposals to meet the situation.

Tel. from Viceroy to S. of S. for I., Aug. 16 1918, P. [illegible]/18.

28. The Government of India suggested the offer to the Sultan of a loan of Rs. 5½ lakhs at 6 per cent. interest to be paid off in 10 years and to be secured on the Muscat customs; the loan to be conditional on agreement by His Highness to undertake a definite programme of reform which would result in financial reorganisation and the improvement of the administration of justice. The Foreign Office did not consider* that the proposed loan could afford any ground for legitimate protest to the French Government, to whom no reference was accordingly made by His Majesty's Government, and it was finally sanctioned by the Secretary of State for India on 4th December 1918.† It was borne wholly by Indian revenues, the Treasury refusing to contribute.‡

* F.O. to I.O., Nov. [illegible] 1918, P. [illegible]/18.

† Tel. to Viceroy, Dec. 4 1918, P. [illegible].

‡ Treasury to F.O., Jan. [illegible]; S. of S. for I. to Viceroy, Feb. 14 1919, P. [illegible]/19.

29. The programme of reform accepted by the Sultan as a condition of the loan covered the following points:—

(1) Appointment by His Highness of an Indian, to be selected by His Majesty's Government, as Customs Director, who would in the first instance reorganise existing customs posts, and subsequently extend a customs system to all ports in Oman.

(2) Fixation of amount of Privy Purse, remainder of State income being appropriated to charges of administration and payment of instalments and interest of loan.

(3) Appointment of a Wazir or Dewan to conduct Courts of Justice and control proceedings of local governors of districts.

(4) Improvement of roads, establishment of schools, &c.

(5) Reorganisation of Sultan's guard with a view to its eventual use as nucleus for a levy corps.

30. Considerable discussion took place regarding these conditions in the early part of 1919, Sir Arnold Wilson, then Civil Commissioner, Baghdad, feeling serious doubt as to whether they did not at once constitute too heavy a commitment on the part of His Majesty's Government, and traverse the principles of self-determination embodied in the post-war policy of the Allies. They were, however, ultimately substantially accepted by the authorities concerned, and were put into operation during 1919. It may be recorded for convenience at this point that the Commercial Treaty of 1891, which had been renewed for five years in 1914, was extended for one year in 1919, and has been extended yearly since that date.

31. An additional loan of Rs. 1 lakh, borne, like the original loan, by Indian revenues, was sanctioned by the Secretary of State for India in February 1920, raising the total of the advance to Rs. 6½ lakhs, repayment of which was to be made in 19 equal half-yearly instalments of Rs. 46,740. 5.§

§ Tel. to Viceroy, Feb. 9 1920, P. [illegible]/20.

32. The very considerable degree of indirect control represented by the measures described in para. 29 was justified from the point of view of Muscat by their results. By the beginning of 1920 the Sultan's debts had been discharged with the assistance of the additional loan; steps had been taken to introduce financial order; the result of the appointment on 1st October 1919 of three trained Egyptian customs officials to reorganise the customs, which provided the major part of the revenue of the State, was seen in a balance in the Treasury on 1st October 1920 of Rs. 3¼ lakhs,‖ and a regular Court of Law, though with less immediately satisfactory results, had also been established. In addition, a European Wazir (Capt. McCollum, formerly Political Agent, Koweit) was employed from January to August 1920, when the reorganisation of the administration referred to in paras. 35–6 below rendered it possible to dispense with his services. Early in 1921, a Muscat levy corps under a British officer, which has since been maintained at a strength varying between 200 and 250, and which is now recruited from the Makran coast, made possible the withdrawal of the Indian troops maintained

‖ Pol. Agent to Pol. Res., Oct. 12 1920, P. [illegible]/20; Feb. [illegible] 1921, P. [illegible]/21.



"ملخص تاريخي للأحداث في أراضي الإمبراطورية العثمانية، فارس وشبه الجزيرة العربية التي تؤثر على الموقف البريطاني في الخليج الفارسي، ١٩٠٧-١٩٢٨" [‎٢٦ظ] (١٨٨/٥٩)

by His Majesty's Government for the defence of the Sultan in Muscat and Muttrah.

33. Simultaneously with the reorganisation of the internal administration, the steps referred to in para. 49 below were being taken to bring about a settlement with the Omani tribes. With the attainment of a settlement in September 1920, the State found itself solvent and in sight of a condition of political stability such as it had not previously enjoyed.

34. While, however, the active intervention of His Majesty's Government had secured the results described above in the affairs of the State, the Sultan, an agreeable but effete and indolent ruler, who had at no stage displayed the qualities of character necessary in the ruler of Oman, saw in the new dispensation an opportunity to divest himself of his nominal responsibilities, and in March 1920, in a private interview with the Viceroy, expressed his desire to abdicate and to reside permanently in India.

P. [illegible]/21.

35. Other considerations apart, the facts that the tribal situation was still critical, that there was no obvious successor, and that the succession was a matter of more than local interest in view of the Sultan's international treaties, rendered the proposal inopportune. Lord Chelmsford declined to countenance it, and His Highness was required to return to Muscat on the conclusion of his visit. But the Sultan was in name at least independent; his reluctant co-operation might do more harm than good, and a compromise, which by reducing His Highness's interference with the administration might simplify the task of reorganisation, was not altogether without advantage. As a result, the Omani tribes having in the autumn of 1920 asked that negotiations might be reopened, the Political Agent, after personal consultation with the Government of India, was authorised to inform the Sultan that His Majesty's Government were willing to assist him in the continued reconstruction of his finances and in his negotiations with the rebels on the following conditions :—

(*a*) That if he persisted in his wish to live away from his State as much as possible, he should spend not less than five months every year continuously at Muscat.

(*b*) That he should authorise the constitution of a regular Advisory Council, purely Arab in composition, to exercise all the ordinary powers of administration, not only during his absence, but during the periods of his presence at Muscat.

(*c*) That he should retain the power to decide all matters of extraordinary importance affecting the interests of his State or his dynasty.

(*d*) That should he at any time change his mind and decide to live permanently at Muscat, these arrangements should be cancelled, and he should resume all powers of administration, subject to the conditions of the loan made to him by His Majesty's Government (see para. 28 above).

36. After lengthy discussions these conditions were accepted by His Highness subject to the reduction of the period of his obligatory annual residence at Muscat and to the fixation of his privy purse at Rs. 10,000 per mensem. The Government of India agreed to modify their requirements; the period of residence was fixed at four months and subsequently reduced to three; and approval was given to a privy purse of Rs. 10,000 per mensem subject to His Highness's continued good behaviour and to the continued ability of the State finances to bear the strain. An arrangement on these lines has since been in operation.

Pol. Agent to Pol. Res., Sept. [illegible] 1923, P. [illegible]; Pol. Res. to G. of I., Dec. 22 1923, P. [illegible]; July 28 1924, P. [illegible].

37. The financial position gave ground for increasing uneasiness in 1923 and 1924. Trade depression had reacted on the customs revenue; the Egyptian customs officials had not proved an unqualified success—one had been dismissed while another had resigned; efforts at retrenchment, and the imposition of certain minor taxes, produced no substantial result. A large increase in revenue could be secured only by an increase in the customs duty from 5 per cent. to 10 per cent., and the existence of treaties between Muscat and France and the U.S.A., fixing that duty at 5 per cent., made action on these lines difficult.



(27)

38. The Government of India endeavoured to meet the situation, to the seriousness of which the Sultan was fully alive, by lending for four months a highly qualified European customs official, Mr. Bower, to reorganise the Muscat customs. At the same time, they agreed, at the request of the Sultan, to find a competent Englishman to serve as Financial Adviser, look after the finances of the State, and aid His Highness and the Council with advice. The Arab Advisory Council established in 1920 (see para. 35) had proved of no real assistance—the Sultan in 1924 had complained that they were, "though very worthy persons . . . absolutely useless as administrators, apart from which they would never come to a decision about any matter, even unimportant questions"; and the Political Resident agreed that "the difficulty was to get them to give a decided opinion on any subject."*

39. The post of Financial Adviser was offered to Mr. B. S. Thomas, O.B.E., formerly Assistant British representative in Trans-Jordania, who assumed duty in April 1925, and in 1926 was appointed Wazir and a member of the Muscat Advisory Council, functioning primarily as Finance Minister, but exercising also a full share in the general government of the State.† Mr. Thomas, who is the servant of the State and not of His Majesty's Government, was engaged on a contract for five years, with six months' leave after three years, plus one month's leave a year, and pay of Rs. 1,500—100—2,000. The terms of his service were approved by the Government of India.

40. The result of the steps referred to above has been a very marked improvement. By April 1925 the financial situation could be reported "more satisfactory than it has been for some years"‡; by June the State was reported solvent, and despite§ fluctuations in trade which have been reflected in decrease of revenue, the improvement has been maintained. An extensive Public Works programme has been initiated, a patrol steamer has been secured,‖ repayment of the State indebtedness has progressed satisfactorily; in 1927 the Government of India felt justified in agreeing to the extension by 2½ years of the period of repayment of the outstanding balance of the loan granted in 1919 (paras. 28 and 31) above, to enable the State to open a primary school and make other minor improvements, and in the same year the Political Resident was able to claim that His Majesty's Government "have put the finances of the State on a sound basis."¶ The situation is the more satisfactory as the 200 miles of quite thickly inhabited coastline, and the powerful and often hostile hinterland, necessitate the maintenance by Muscat of establishments "on a scale which would appear absurd in a place like Bahrein or Koweit."**

41. The improvement referred to above has been secured for rather than by the Sultan, although His Highness has on occasion shown a definite interest in the action taken.†† Sir L. Haworth in March 1928 reported that "the Sultan is practically worthless as a Ruler, though he takes a certain interest in seeing that others rule for him." The Resident continued, "It was not thought advisable in 1920 to allow him to abdicate, nor do I think it desirable now. An absentee Sultan who does not interfere with the Government has its advantages. It has enabled us to make the arrangement by which with a Council and a British Wazir the finances of the State have been put in order, and there is every hope that in a very few years . . . it will commence a new career in flourishing circumstances. Until the Sultan's son is old enough to take over the reins, the Sultan should if possible continue."‡‡

42. The cloud on the horizon at the moment is the attitude of the tribes at Sur, the second port of Oman. A critical stage has not been reached, although the local Amir of Jaalan has set up an independent customs administration, but the Political Resident apprehends that should the Amir endeavour to throw off his allegiance to the Sultan and establish an independent dominion similar to that of the Omanis of the interior, the very considerable reduction of the Sultan's dominions and revenues which would be involved might necessitate active economic pressure by His Majesty's Government on the Sur tribes on behalf of His Highness.§§

* Tel. [illegible] T. from Pol. Res. to G. of I., Mar. [illegible] 1924, P. [illegible]/24.

† Letter [illegible] from Pol. Res. to G. of I., April [illegible] 1926, P. [illegible]/26.

P. [illegible]/24.

‡ Letter [illegible] from Pol. Res. to G. of I., April [illegible] 1925, P. [illegible]/25.

§ Letter [illegible] from Pol. Res. to G. of I., Aug. [illegible] 1925, P. [illegible]/25.

‖ Letter from Pol. Agent to Pol. Res., Dec. [illegible], P. [illegible].

¶ Pol. Res. to G. of I., Nov. [illegible] 1927, P. [illegible]/28.

** Report by Pol. Agent, Oct. [illegible], P. [illegible].

†† Letter from Pol. Agent to Pol. Res., Aug. [illegible] 1926, P. [illegible]/26.

‡‡ Letter [illegible] from Pol. Res. to G. of I., Mar. 2 1928, P. [illegible]/28.

§§ Letter [illegible] from Pol. Res. to G. of I., April 28 1928, P. [illegible]/28.



IV.—Relations between the Sultan of Muscat and Oman and the Ibadhi Tribes of Oman. The Oman Rebellion, 1913-21.

Lor. i, 418.

43. Up to 1783 the capital of Muscat and Oman was at Rastaq in the interior. Up to 1793 the temporal ruler, who was also the spiritual ruler of the country, had, in accordance with the tenets of the Ibadhi sect of Islam, been elected by the people. The transfer of the capital to the coast of Muscat relieved the fanatical tribes of the interior of the direct control to which they had hitherto been subject, while the fact that from the usurpation of Saiyid Sultan in 1793 the formality of election had been dispensed with, enabled them to regard their nominal ruler as a usurper. The relations with heretical foreign Powers which followed the transfer of the capital and the progressive degeneration in the capacity of the ruling house by which that transfer was accompanied, further weakened the position of the Sultan *vis-à-vis* the Omani tribes; and a series of rebellions between 1829 and 1867 culminated in the temporary seizure of power (1868-71) by a representative of a younger branch of the ruling family supported by the tribes.

Lor. i, [illegible]. Lor. i, [illegible]. Lor. i, [illegible].

44. The usurper was overthrown in 1871 by the legitimate branch; but between that date and 1913 numerous attempts were made by the Omani tribes to dethrone the Sultans, whose survival as rulers may fairly be said to have been due solely to the support of His Majesty's Government. In the years immediately before the war, tribal feeling was inflamed by the stoppage of the importation of arms,* following on the suppression of the slave trade, both of them measures permitted by Islam, at the instigation of Christian Powers; a carefully organised conspiracy followed, and in May 1913, in an outburst of religious fanaticism, the Omani tribes arose in rebellion.†

45. Reinforcements were despatched by His Majesty's Government in fulfilment of a guarantee given to the Sultan in 1895, and then communicated to the Sheikhs of Oman, that they would not allow attacks to be made on Muscat or Muttrah whatever differences the Sultan might have with his tribes—a guarantee, the principle of which was extended in practice to the ports of the Batinah coast and to Kuryat, which contained resident British subjects. The warning in question was renewed, with the approval of His Majesty's Government,‡ but produced no impression on the Omanis, and while in January 1915 the crushing defeat of an attack in force on the British outposts stationed at Bait-el-Falaj for the protection of Muscat and Mattrah taught the tribes their lesson, by 1916 the rebels had obtained complete control of all Oman proper, and had organised a Government in it; and they remained thereafter in undisputed possession of the interior, and a constant menace to the coast towns. These they would probably have taken had it not been for the British garrison at Bait-el-Falaj and the knowledge that the arrival of one of His Majesty's ships would quickly have forced them to relinquish any hold which they might temporarily have established.

Political Report to Pol. Sec., May [illegible] 1917, P. [illegible].

46. Thanks to the efforts of the Political Agent, a conference to consider terms of peace between the Sultan and the Imam of the Omani tribes took place at Sib on the 15th September 1915. It was completely abortive,§ the demands of the Sultan that the Wadi Samail and its forts (captured in August 1913, and essential to the commercial prosperity of Muscat)‖ should be returned to him, and his temporal supremacy in Oman recognised, being categorically refused by the Omanis, who demanded on their part that the Sultan should reform his Government according to their ideas, that their financial claims should be settled in full, and that the free purchase of arms and ammunition should be allowed. No reconciliation proved possible, and the negotiations were broken off.

47. From the breaking off of the negotiations in September 1915, no further steps were taken towards a settlement until March 1918. The Imam consolidated his power in the interior, while the Sultan's Government, according to the Political Agent, "became involved in hopeless debt and reached an unparalleled degree of ineptitude."

48. Further abortive negotiations took place in March 1918, but there was no substantial advance until the following year. At the beginning of

* Tel. from Viceroy to S. of S. for I., Aug. [illegible] 1913, P. [illegible].

† Cf. P. [illegible].

‡ Tel. to Viceroy, July [illegible] 1915, P. [illegible].

§ P. [illegible].

‖ P. [illegible], P. [illegible].



919 (see paras. 29-30) the necessity of taking drastic measures to preserve the Sultan's Government on the coast from complete collapse was recognised by the Government of India and His Majesty's Government; a loan from Indian revenues was made to His Highness to enable him to put his house in order internally, and pressure was put on the Omani tribes through the Political Agent with a view to securing a settlement between them and the Sultan. After much correspondence, the Imam was persuaded to resume negotiations, and a meeting took place between him and the Political Agent at Sib on the 15th September 1919.*

49. Very great difficulty was experienced in arriving at agreement. It was only after negotiations had been broken off, and definite action taken to show not only that the support of the Sultan by His Majesty's Government was a reality, but that the Sultan was in a position to retaliate effectively on the Omanis by the taxing of their produce when it came down to the coast for export, that any advance was secured. A British Adviser was appointed to the State,† a British warship, which actually inflicted punishment at Masnaah,‡ was despatched to support the Sultan's authority on the coast, and prohibitive duties were imposed on Omani produce, with the result that in July 1920 the Imam was murdered by his tribes,§ and that on 25th September 1920, after considerable further negotiation, agreement was reached between the conflicting parties.‖

50. Under the terms of settlement, the Sultan undertook¶ not to interfere in the "internal affairs" of Oman (no formal admission of Omani independence being given); not to impose taxation in excess of 5 per cent. on commodities brought into the coast towns from Oman; to allow members of the tribes to enter and leave Muscat and the coast towns in safety and freedom; and to return fugitive criminals on demand.

51. The tribes, on the other hand, contracted to remain in peace and amity with the Sultan's Government, with which they were not to interfere; not to attack the coast towns; to impose no restrictions on trade; to undertake that travellers to Oman on their lawful business should be free and safe; to turn out fugitive criminals and evil-doers; and to dispose of the claims of merchants and others against them according to the Sharah law.

52. The agreement, which, as will be seen, involves recognition by the Sultan of the practical independence of the Omani tribes, has, on the whole, worked well since 1920. Action had to be taken in 1922 by His Majesty's ships in support of the Muscat Government against one of the Omani tribes (the Yal Saad, on the Batinah coast),** but, broadly speaking, the situation has stabilised itself, and the Omani tribes, while they would no doubt constitute an immediate menace were the support of His Majesty's Government withdrawn, have ceased, at any rate temporarily, to interfere with and harass the Sultan's Government.

* P. 8298/19; Tel. 1484 S. from Viceroy to S. of S. for I., Oct. 22 1919, P. 6734/19, 7308/19.

† Tel. from S. of S. for I. to Viceroy, Jan. 16 1920, P. 6544/19, 5039/20.

‡ Admiralty to I.O., April 21 1920, P. 3148/20.

§ Viceroy to S. of S. for I., 8043, Aug. 16 1920, P. 6141/20.

‖ Viceroy to S. of S. for I., 1148 S., Oct. 2 1920, P. 7404, 8294.

¶ G. of I. Desp. 27, Mar. 31 1921, P. 1961/21.

** P. 3148/20, 4438/22, 896/23.

V.—Foreign Relations of Muscat, 1908-1928.

53. During the first part of the period now under consideration, the existence of treaty relations between **France** and Muscat was, as will be seen from paras. 7-16 above, of the first importance from the standpoint of His Majesty's Government in connection with the suppression of the arms traffic. It is unnecessary to enter into the details of the relations between the two countries, since the substantial consideration which led to French interest in Muscat disappeared with the amicable settlement reached between His Majesty's Government and the French Government on the suppression of the arms traffic in February 1914. But the settlement in question did not involve the abrogation of the French Treaty with Muscat of 1844, or of the Anglo-French Declaration of 1862, and the continued existence of these instruments is of sufficient importance in present circumstances to call for brief notice in this Memorandum.

54. As will be seen from the précis of the Muscat Treaties referred to in para. 2 above, the Sultan of Muscat has a Commercial Treaty with France dating from 1844. There is further the joint Anglo-French Declaration of



"ملخص تاريخي للأحداث في أراضي الإمبراطورية العثمانية، فارس وشبه الجزيرة العربية التي تؤثر على الموقف البريطاني في الخليج الفارسي، ١٩٠٧-١٩٢٨" [‎٢٨ظ] (١٨٨/٦٣)

1862, the signatories to which agree reciprocally to respect the independence of the Sultan. While the agreement concluded by the Sultan with Her Majesty's Government in 1891, under which he pledged himself and his successors never to cede, sell, mortgage or otherwise give for occupation, save to Her Majesty's Government, the dominions of Muscat and Oman or any of their dependencies, represents a substantial departure from the spirit of the Declaration of 1862, that Declaration remained and remains binding, and an assurance that His Majesty's Government recognised it as such was formally given to France in September 1913.* Its existence, taken with the existence of the Treaty of 1844, was responsible for the difficulty which arose with France in connection with the suppression of the arms traffic between 1910 and 1914, and it is not only clear that it precludes the establishment by His Majesty's Government of a formal protectorate over Muscat, but in view of the action taken under its terms *vis-à-vis* France at Bander Gisseh in 1899, it seems probable that it constitutes a definite impediment even to the acquisition by His Majesty's Government of the lease, e.g. for use as a naval base, of any portion of Muscat territory. This latter difficulty is of importance at the present time in view of the revival by the Political Resident of the proposal for the establishment of a British naval base at Khassab in the Musandim Peninsula (see paras. 65 to 71 below).

55. It is unnecessary to enter into the history of the efforts made between 1910 and 1914, in connection with the suppression of the arms traffic, to secure French concurrence in the abrogation of the Declaration of 1862 and possibly of the Treaty of 1844. Suffice it to say that it proved impracticable to arrive at an agreement which could be confined to Muscat, or even to Muscat and the French possessions in India†; that France was not prepared to cede her rights in return for territorial acquisitions in India alone‡; that the Government of India were reluctant to agree to any cession of Indian territory, save in return for a corresponding acquisition of French territory in India (Chandernagore and the Loges); and that proposals of compensation in other parts of the world by the cession of Gambia, the rectification of the Desert Boundary between the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and French Equatorial Africa, or by the grant to the French Government of certain concessions in North Africa, came to nothing.

56. The position, therefore, is that French rights persist in their entirety. On the other hand, for the last 14 years no matter of dispute between the French Government and His Majesty's Government has arisen in Muscat; the Muscat dhows flying the French flag had fallen by 1920 to seven, of which two only belonged to French subjects§; and French interests in the affairs of the Sultanate has shown a progressive decrease, although a Consulate is still maintained by France. In 1920–1 the French Government relinquished the coal depôt at Mokalla,|| which had been granted them at the time of the Bander Gisseh incident of 1899 dealt with in Mr. Parker's memorandum, and in 1928 the Political Resident¶ stated that he gathered from the French Consul (at Bushire?) that "France now takes very little interest in Muscat and is now considering closing down permanently the Consulate, which has not been held by any incumbent for some years."

57. While, however, France may no longer actively concern herself with Muscat affairs, so long as the engagements referred to in para. 54 remain in being His Majesty's Government cannot be regarded as free agents in respect of Muscat, even though practical control may rest with them and all external expenditure on the State be financed by them. On a broad view, the interests of His Majesty's Government would probably best be served by the abrogation of both instruments, and it is possible that, at some later stage, if French interest in Muscat diminishes to vanishing point, the French Government might be willing to consider the extinction of their rights as part of an arrangement which would also dispose of the long-standing question of the French Loges in India itself, without demanding an unreasonable *quid pro quo*. But it cannot be overlooked that the 1862 Declaration, inconvenient as it may be in certain ways to His Majesty's Government, is of value as constituting a certain check on designs on Muscat by other Powers. From a different standpoint, its existence, taken with that

* Sir E. Grey to French C. d'A., Sept. 22 1913, P. 4232.

† P. 882/11.

‡ P. 889/11.

§ Pol. Res. to G. of I., July 21 1920, P. 7122/20.

|| Tel. 1464 S. from Viceroy to S. of S. for I., Dec. 8 1920, P. 8786/20; F.O. to I.O., Sept. 26 1921, P. 4082/21.

¶ Letter 109 S. to G. of I., Mar 2 1928, P. 1889/28.



of the Treaty of 1844, is an assurance to the Sultan, the value of which was certainly fully appreciated by his predecessor, that he will not suffer the fate of Zanzibar.

58. **The United States of America**, despite their Treaty of 1833 with Muscat, appear in practice to have no relations of any importance with that State, their interests in which are now entrusted to His Majesty's Government.* No question affecting these relations arose during the period now under consideration. Here, however, as in the case of France, the guarantees embodied in the Treaty of 1833 would make it impossible for the Sultan to increase his customs duty (the most important method of raising revenue at his disposal) without the prior concurrence of the United States Government (cp. para. 37 above).

59. No question affecting the relations between the Sultan and the **Dutch Government** arose during the period in question, and those relations appear, as in the case of the United States Government, to be entirely unimportant. Under the Commercial Declaration of 1877 Holland is, however, entitled to most-favoured-nation treatment, and so would be affected by any modification of the customs duties.

60. The possibility of the development of a **German** interest in Muscat was of interest to His Majesty's Government in the years before the war. The present Sultan was informed in 1913 that His Majesty's Government could not agree to direct correspondence between him and the German Consul, a practice contrary to the practice of Sultan Faisal, who had referred to His Majesty's Government matters affecting Powers unrepresented at Muscat.†

The danger of the acquisition by Germany of a foothold in Muscat through the grant to Muscatis of German certificates of nationality, was prominently before His Majesty's Government and the Government of India in 1914. To prevent the establishment of a precedent which could be quoted by Germany, arrangements were made that the British flag should not be granted to Muscat subjects in British East Africa unless a "no objection" certificate had first been secured from the Sultan through the Political Agent,‡ and the question of securing the Sultan's approval to an edict which would have made his personal consent a condition of the transfer of allegiance by an Omani to a foreign State was under consideration at the outbreak of the war.§ The difficulty which would be presented by a German request to the signatories of the Joint Declaration of 1862 for their concurrence in the conclusion of a direct German Commercial Treaty with Muscat (on the basis of which a political connection could be developed), were brought to the attention of Government by the Political Resident in July 1914.

Relations between Muscat and Persia.

61. No question of importance as between Persia and Muscat has arisen during the period now in question. It may be recorded that in the autumn of 1914, on the request of the Persian Government, the Political Agent was instructed to exercise his good offices on behalf of Persian subjects in Muscat should an appeal be made to him, and in all serious cases of hardship and oppression.¶

The report recently received from Sir Lionel Haworth that instructions had been issued by the Persian Government to the Governor of Bushire that Persia can recognise no rulers on the Arab coast of the Gulf, and that persons belonging to and arriving from Muscat (as from the other principalities on the Arab littoral) are to be considered Persian subjects, and Persian passports issued to them, necessitates, however, a brief reference to the possible basis of a Persian claim to suzerainty over Muscat. So far as can be traced, the only two incidents in the past on which any such claim could be based are the fact that for a few months in 1623 Persia occupied Sohar and Khor Fakkan and that from 1737 until her expulsion in 1744 she was in occupation of Muscat. It is impossible as yet to estimate the importance which should be attached to the report referred to above, of which no confirmation is available from other sources. Any Persian claim of the

* Tel. from Viceroy to S. of S. for I., Oct. 29 1920, P. 7938/20.

† Tel. from Viceroy to S. of S. for I., Dec. 21 1913, P. 1/14; F.O. to I.O., Jan. 8 1914, P. 128.

‡ Pol. Res. to G. of I., Sept. 29 1913, P. 4604; F.O. to I.O., June 26 1914, P. 2346/14.

§ Pol. Res. to G. of I., July 26 1914, P. 3076/14.

¶ F.O. to I.O., Nov. 4 1914, P. 4394, P. 2024/14.

Tel. from Pol. Res. to S. of S. for I., Sept. 17 1924, T. 188, P. 3441/24.

Lor. I. 388.
Lor. I. 406-7.



nature indicated would, however, clearly be fantastic, and could not in any circumstances be admitted by His Majesty's Government. The fact that Muscat is in treaty relations of long standing, not only with His Majesty's Government but with other first-class Powers, and that those treaty relations are based on the recognition by the Powers in question of the complete independence of the State, would further strengthen the Sultan's position against any claim at this stage to suzerainty by Persia.

Relations between Muscat and Ibn Saud.

62. Ibn Saud is a growing influence on the Trucial Coast, but he has not so far come very directly in contact with Muscat, to the independence of which he constitutes at the moment a less immediate menace than is the case on the Trucial Coast.

VI.—Miscellaneous Questions.

(*a*) The Muscat Order in Council.
(*b*) Establishment of a British Naval Base on the Musandim Peninsula.
(*c*) Cession of Gwadur.
(*d*) Oil in Muscat.

(a) The Muscat Order in Council—1867 and 1915.

63. From 1867 the jurisdiction exercised over British subjects in Muscat by the Political Agent and His Britannic Majesty's Consul was exercised under the Muscat Order in Council of 1867.* The revision of this Order, which had become out of date, was raised by the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf in 1913. His proposals that the revision should be undertaken were accepted by the Government of India† and His Majesty's Government, and a revised Order in Council in substitution for the Order of 1867 was approved by His Majesty on the 3rd February 1915. The new Order, which came into force on the 1st January 1916,‡ vests in the Political Agent, subject to the general control of, and right of appeal to, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, jurisdiction over—

(*a*) British subjects, and British ships, with their boats, and persons and property on board, or belonging to them, within the limits of the Order.
(*b*) Muscat subjects registered in the Political Agency as in the regular service of British subjects, subject to a proviso as to the disposal of cases in which such Muscat subjects are concerned.
(*c*) The property, &c., of all British subjects and of the Muscat subjects referred to in (*b*), whether within or without the limits of the Order.
(*d*) Foreigners, with respect to whom any State, &c., the subjects, or under the protection, of which they are has agreed by treaty to the exercise of power or authority by His Majesty.
(*e*) Muscat subjects and foreigners, other than those referred to in (*b*) and (*d*) in certain specified cases.

The limits of the Order are the territories and territorial waters of the Sultan of Muscat and Oman.

64. Various regulations, &c., have since 1916 been issued under the new Order, certain amendments in which were approved by His Majesty in Council in 1922,§ but no question of importance has arisen in connection with its working.

(b) Proposal for the establishment of a British Naval Base in the Musandim Peninsula.

65. The earlier history of this proposal, which appears first to have been made by Sir Lewis Pelly, then Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, in 1863, is given in the Foreign Office Memorandum of 1908, and in Lorimer's Persian Gulf Gazetteer, Vol. I, pp. 251 to 258.

66. The question was again raised in 1913. In a Note communicated to the Committee of Imperial Defence on 17th January 1913, the Admiralty expressed the view that it was "essential that any naval station that may be

* Cp. letter 205 from Pol. Res. to G. of I., Jan. 19 1913, P. 4487/13.

† G. of I. Secret Desp. 156, Dec. 12 S. of S. for I., Oct. 16 1913, P. 4487/13.

‡ G. of I. Notification 2016 G., Dec. 22 1915, P. 271/16.

§ P. 951/22.



required" (i.e. at the mouth of the Gulf) "should not be either at Bunder Abbas or on the adjacent islands, but on the Ras Musandim promontory or the Arabian shore. There would otherwise be risk of our being driven by military force from our necessary naval base. Moreover, the only anchorages which can be trusted are on the Arabian shore."

67. Almost simultaneously the Political Resident had suggested that it might be desirable to choose Ras Musandim as a site for a lighthouse in preference to Little Quoin,* and the Government of India, in the light of the expression of the views of the Admiralty quoted above, were prepared to agree to the substitution "apart from the considerations arising from the Anglo-French Declaration of 1862."†

68. In April 1913 the Government of India reported that the Director, Royal Indian Marine, saw technical objections to the selection of Musandim as the site for a lighthouse on the grounds that "thick weather over Musandim is the rule rather than the exception . . . further . . . worst tides experienced anywhere in the Gulf and its approaches are found round Musandim Island."‡

69. In May the Admiralty expressed the view that "while a naval base on the Musandim Peninsula would theoretically be in a somewhat better strategical position for the control of a railway passing along the northern shore of the entrance to the Gulf, if threatened by a hostile advance from the north-west, practical considerations point rather for the present to the use of Henjam . . . with Basidu as a subsidiary base. It does not appear necessary to contemplate the actual fortification of a naval base in this region so long as we retain the command of the sea in Eastern waters."§ This disposed of the question of a station on Musandim; and it was agreed that the lighthouse in contemplation should be erected on Little Quoin as being preferable from the strictly navigational standpoint.

70. There appear to have been no developments until in February 1927 the Political Resident‖ indicated that Khassab was of value, not merely in connection with the air route, on which it would constitute a jumping off ground for Gwadur on the Makran coast, but for strategical reasons, since "the country possessing it can practically command egress from and ingress to the Persian Gulf." Sir L. Haworth therefore favoured the purchase of Khassab from Muscat, possibly for about £12,000, and the establishment of "a Gibraltar at the head of the Gulf." He regarded this as practicable *vis-à-vis* France, in view of the right of pre-emption enjoyed by His Majesty's Government under the Exclusive Agreement of 1891.

71. No views have been expressed on the subject by the Government of India. With the Persian challenge to the position of His Majesty's Government in Basidu and Henjam the possibility of establishing, if not a fortified base, at any rate a station, in the Musandim Peninsula or on one of the adjoining islands, on two of which (Telegraph Island and Sheep Island) the British flag has for a short period been hoisted in the past, becomes of more immediate importance. But, financial and strategical considerations apart, the extent to which His Majesty's Government are free agents *vis-à-vis* France, who, though aware of, is not a party to, and has never formally recognised, the Exclusive Agreement of 1891, will call for careful examination before a decision can be taken.

(c) The Cession of Gwadur.

72. It was decided in 1863 after exhaustive examination that no attention need or could be paid to the claims to Gwadur, a dependency of Muscat in Makran, on the Persian littoral of the Gulf, of the Khan of Kalat or of the Gitchkis. This decision was reaffirmed by the Government of India in 1928.¶

73. The question of its retransfer to Kalat at a price was raised by the Political Agent, Muscat, in 1921, when the financial situation of Muscat was critical, but the Government of India were instructed** that no overtures should be made to the Sultan of Muscat without prior reference to His Majesty's Government, and the matter dropped.

* Tel. from Pol. Res. to G. of I., Jan. 3 1913, P. 798.

† Tel. from Viceroy to S. of S. for I., Mar. 12 1913, P. 884.

‡ Tel. from Viceroy to S. of S. for I., April 28 1913, P. 1463.

§ Admiralty to F.O., May 1 1913, P. 1781/13.

‖ Desp. 4 from Pol. Res. to G. of I., Feb. 18 1927, P. 1571.

¶ Letter from G. of I. to A.G.G. Baluchistan, July 18 1928, P. 4240/28.

** Tel. 1179 from S. of S. for I. to Viceroy, Sept. 1 1924; Viceroy to S. of S. for I., 1192 S., Oct. 2 1924, P. 6871, 7848.



Desp. to G. of I., Feb. 19 1927, P. 1678.

74. The geographical position of Gwadur would lend it considerable importance in the event of an air route being established along the north Arabian coast, and the Political Resident in February 1927 proposed that it should be purchased outright for, say, £135,000, or about 20 years' purchase of the present customs revenue (Rs. 118,000 in 1926, say Rs. 1 lakh after deduction of expenses of collection) as a British possession, the Khan of Kalat being compensated for his claim out of the amount in question. No opinion on the matter has been expressed by the Government of India. But, as in the case of Khasab and the Musandim Promontory (para. 71 above), the extent to which His Majesty's Government are free agents *vis-à-vis* France would need very careful examination before a decision could be taken even were the proposal held to be free from objection on other grounds.

(d) Oil in Muscat.

Pol. Res. to G. of I., Feb. 23 1923, P. 1184/23.

C.O. to I.O., May 22 1925, &c., P. 1464/25.

75. The Sultan undertook in February 1923 not to exploit any oil which might be found in his territories, or to grant permission for its exploitation, without prior consultation with the Political Agent, and the approval of the Government of India. An oil concession was secured from His Highness, with the approval of His Majesty's Government, by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company in 1925. (The general question of oil in the Gulf is dealt with in the Memorandum by the Board of Trade on p. 157.)

VII.—Summary.

76. The last 20 years have seen the practical elimination of French influence in Muscat and the consolidation of the influence of His Majesty's Government. Despite the fact that the Sultanate is independent, a very close degree of indirect control has been established; the succession has been regulated; the customs administration has been brought under the management of officials recommended by the Government of India; a European adviser, a servant indeed of the Sultan, but recommended and selected by the Government of India, and working in close and friendly co-operation with the Political Agent, is the mainspring of the administration; the arms traffic has disappeared, and, thanks to the active intervention, both political and otherwise, of His Majesty's Government, a working arrangement has been reached with the rebellious tribes of the interior of Oman. The main difficulties which at the moment confront the State are the instability of the Sultan's character, and the possibility that before a suitable successor is available he may renew his desire to abdicate; the financial situation, which is complicated by the need for expenditure on essential improvements, the fact that the main source of additional revenue—increase of customs duties—cannot without great difficulty be tapped, and the necessity of repayment to the Government of India of the balance of the loan made to the State in 1919; and the problem, the importance of which cannot at this stage be appraised, but which may not prove to be serious, of the attitude of the tribes of Sur.

77. The direct intervention in the affairs of Muscat of His Majesty's Government has been very definitely in the interests of the State, and, so far as those interests are concerned, it is desirable that it should be maintained. At the same time, so long as the treaties at present in force between the Sultan and the Governments of France, Holland and the United States continue to subsist, there can be no question of the establishment of a formal protectorate, even should wider objections of principle not be held to militate against the acceptance of such a policy.

From the narrower point of view of the interests of His Majesty's Government and the Government of India, there is no less advantage in a maintenance of the *status quo*, under which control in everything but name rests with His Majesty's Government. With the gradual elimination of British authority from the south Persian coast and with the adoption, for however long it may be maintained, of an active policy in the Gulf by Persia, the stranglehold on the Gulf which the effective control of Muscat constitutes has assumed an importance, more especially in view of British commitments in Iraq, which it did not in the past present. Moreover, not only is effective, if veiled,



control of Muscat the *point d'appui* of the consolidation of British influence on the north Arabian littoral, but the danger, in its absence, of active foreign interest in the State cannot be overlooked, while should it ultimately prove that the difficulties in the way of an Imperial air route through Persian territory are insuperable, Muscat, with its dependency Gwadur, may prove to be of great importance for air reasons. From the naval point of view, should a decision favourable to the establishment of a naval base in the Musandim Peninsula at any stage be taken, and should it prove possible to reconcile the acquisition of a site for such a base with the terms of the Anglo-French Declaration of 1862, the principality would acquire an additional importance.

78. To sum up. The predominant influence in Muscat of His Majesty's Government is in the interest of the State itself. The commitments involved in its maintenance are not, in existing circumstances, heavy, though the presence of a British Adviser and the exclusion of foreign interference imposes on His Majesty's Government a measure of responsibility for the progress, or lack of progress, of the State. The predominant influence of His Majesty's Government is equally, and more especially in present circumstances, an Imperial interest, whether from the commercial or the strategical standpoint. It can be maintained without undue "Westernisation," and, while it can never be popular with the fanatical tribes of the interior, its withdrawal is unlikely to be desired so long as the country internally remains divided as it has been for many years, and so long as no ruler arises with a personality so outstanding as to show himself capable of disposing effectively, single-handed, of the problems presented by the government of his State.

VIII.—Points referred to in connection with Persian Gulf Sub-Committee.

79. The points in connection with Muscat which have been specifically mentioned in connection with the deliberations of the Persian Gulf Sub-Committee are as follow:—

(1) Is the maintenance of the independence of Muscat (which is also threatened, though less immediately, by Ibn Saud) necessary for British purposes, and, if so, how is it to be secured? (P.G. 3 (viii).)
(2) Steps necessary on the north Arabian coast in connection with slavery and the arms traffic. (P.G. 6, 2 (*c*) 3.)
(3) Extent to which British influence is to be maintained in Muscat: question of relations between the Sultan and the Amirs of Jaalan (Sur): position *vis-à-vis* the French. (P.G. 6, 2 (*c*) 5.)

IX.—Views expressed by Government of India.

80. The Government of India have expressed the view that "the maintenance of independence of Muscat, Koweit, Bahrein and the Trucial Chief is necessary. Our veiled protectorate over them suffices against European encroachments. So long as we do not alienate Arab opinion by attempting undue Westernisation, it suffices also against encroachments by the Wahabi State. At need it can be more explicitly asserted."

Tel. from Viceroy to S. of S. for I., July 23 1928. P. [illegible], P.G. [illegible]





BAHREIN, 1908–1928.

(Communicated by India Office and revised to 8th October 1928.)

A.—Administration.

1. Sheikh Isa Bin Ali, K.C.I.E. (1919), C.S.I. (1915), (born 1848, succeeded 1869), was relieved of control of the administration in 1923 by the Government of India with the approval of His Majesty's Government, but remains titular Sheikh of the Islands, his eldest surviving son, **Sheikh Hamad**, C.S.I. (1921) (born 1874, right of succession publicly recognised by Government of India in 1901, entitled to a salute of seven guns), who has three sons, born in 1895 (Sheikh Salman), 1898 and 1902, and two brothers, Sheikh Mohammed (born 1877) and Sheikh Abdulla, C.I.E. (1915) (born 1880), having taken over responsibility for the administration as the fully empowered agent of his father. Sheikh Isa, although no longer in fact the ruler of Bahrein, is understood to continue to carry weight locally, and his wife, a vigorous and unscrupulous lady in the sixties, who prior to his deposition was stated completely to dominate her husband, remains an important influence in the State.

2. The principality is an independent Arab State, under the protection of His Majesty's Government, but not a British Protectorate. Its ruler is precluded by his engagements, of which an abstract is printed in the Précis of Treaties appended to this Memorandum, from receiving the representatives of, or entering into relations with, foreign Powers, and from ceding, selling, mortgaging, or giving for occupation, save to His Majesty's Government, any part of his territory. He is bound to suppress the slave trade, and to prohibit traffic in arms, within his territory, and he is precluded from granting a concession for oil, or for pearl fishing, save with the approval of His Majesty's Government.

3. The internal administration is conducted by the Sheikh (Hamad), assisted since 1926 by a European Financial Adviser* (Mr. C. Dalrymple Belgrave) and since 1924 by a European Director of Customs (Mr. de Grenier),† who has, it is understood, been given a year's notice, expiring in June 1929, on the initiative of the Government of India, and a European Chief of Police who is also Assistant to the Financial Adviser (Captain L. S. Parke).‡ All these officers are servants of the Sheikh and are paid from Bahrein funds. Their contracts and their conditions of service, like their original selection for employment, were, however, approved by the Government of India.

‡ Tel. from Pol. Res. to S. of S. for I., T. 83, Sept. 11, 1928, P. 5431/28 and P. 5031.

4. His Majesty's Government and the Government of India are represented in Bahrein by the Political Agent, Bahrein (at present Lt.-Col. C. C. J. Barrett, C.S.I., C.I.E., formerly First Assistant Resident at Aden), an appointment created in 1904, and borne on the cadre of the Political Department of the Government of India. The Political Agent is directly subordinate to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf. He does not hold His Majesty's Commission as a Consul, and exercises no consular functions. Under the Bahrein Order in Council, 1913, as amended by the Bahrein (Amendment) Order in Council of 1922, he is the District Magistrate and Sessions Judge, and exercises jurisdiction (subject to appeal to the Court of the Political Resident) in respect of British and foreign subjects in Bahrein. His jurisdiction in the case of foreigners, exercised in the case of foreigners other than Nejdis since 1904–5, was regularised by the Order in Council of 1913 (which, owing first to the undesirability of complicating the 1913–4 negotiations with Turkey and then to the war, was not actually brought into operation until February 1919) and was extended to cover all foreigners in 1920.

Lor. i, 922.

* Appointed for four years in the first instance, subject to three months' notice, from June 1926, on Rs. 1,000—50—2,200, &c. (Tel. from G. of I. to Pol. Res., 142s, 23 Oct. 1925; P. 3015/25.)

† Appointed for three years from 14 Jan. 1924, P. 2146, letter from G. of I. to Pol. Res., No. 400s, 10 April 1924; Pol. Res.'s. lr. to G. of I., 22 Dec. 1923, 7168; P. 487/24.



5. The effect of the recommendations of the Masterton-Smith Committee of 1921 was to leave control of Bahrein affairs, other than matters of policy affecting relations with Ibn Saud, which were reserved to the Colonial Office, to the Government of India, subject to the general control of His Majesty's Government, and to the prior concurrence of the Colonial Office in matters of "political significance." The question of the channels through which the instructions of His Majesty's Government on matters affecting the Islands issue is dealt with in paras. 4 and 5 of the Note on Political Control in the Persian Gulf, p. 40.

6. Expenditure on Bahrein in respect of the suppression of the slave trade (Rs. 52 in 1919–20) and of sanitary arrangements (Rs. 1,200 in 1919–20) is divided equally between the Government of India and the Foreign Office. All other expenditure, on the Agency, Darbar presents, &c. (amounting in 1919–20 to Rs. 79,304) is borne wholly by the Government of India.*

B.—Internal History of Bahrein (including relations with His Majesty's Government), 1908–1928.

7. The internal history of Bahrein falls into two periods: the first from 1908 to the deposition of Sheikh Isa in 1923, the second from 1923 to the present day.

(1) 1908–1923: Sheikh Isa.

8. Little of importance occurred between 1908 and 1919. In 1909 a formal request in writing that he should be relieved by His Majesty's Government of the responsibility of exercising jurisdiction over foreigners in his country was obtained by the Political Agent from the Sheikh (P. 1314/09). His Excellency explained in 1912 that by "foreigners" he had not intended the dependants of petty Arab potentates in the Gulf, a contention which was accepted by His Majesty's Government in 1919, but which, in view of the attitude of the Arab chiefs affected, it proved impossible, as explained below, to continue to entertain. The Order in Council approved by the King in 1913, the introduction of which was postponed till 1919, limited the jurisdiction of the Political Agent to "foreigners with respect to whom the Sheikh has agreed with His Majesty for, or consented to, the exercise of jurisdiction by His Majesty." Certain minor administrative improvements were effected by the Sheikh from time to time under strong pressure from the Political Agent; in 1911 His Excellency agreed not to allow any foreign Power to open a Post Office in Bahrein and not to grant a pearl fishing concession to foreigners†; a wireless station was erected in 1912; with great difficulty the Sheikh was persuaded between 1912 and 1914 to remedy the grievances of traders in regard to landing arrangements and the handling and storage of cargo at Bahrein‡; after some discussion he agreed in 1914§ not to search for oil himself or give others permission to do so without consulting the Political Agent and receiving the approval of the Government of India (subsequent developments as regards oil concessions in Bahrein are dealt with in para. 19 below); responsibility for the quarantine duties, which had caused some difficulty in the past,|| was taken over in 1916 by the Government of India; the attitude of the Sheikh and his sons during the war was correct. But the position as between the ruling family and their subjects steadily deteriorated; administration lapsed until it could be reported in 1922 as "far behind the times in comparison with other Arab States"**, the "bigoted incapacity" of the Sheikh (to quote the Political Resident in 1911), the corruption or weakness of members of his family, and the succession of tyrannical acts perpetrated by the Sheikh, his wife and his sons, not only gave rise to increasing popular discontent, but, since the Political Agent was not in a position to intervene effectively (the energies of His Majesty's Government and the Government of India being elsewhere engaged), reacted unfavourably on our position in the Islands.

9. In 1919 Sheikh Abdulla, the Sheikh's youngest son, visited England in charge of Capt. N. N. E. Bray, to convey to His Majesty the congratulations of Sheikh Isa on the successful outcome of the war, and was received by the

Marginal notes:

M.S. Report, para. 12.

See discn. on P. 1282/23 and P. 1478/23.

* Sir D. Bray to Mr. Wakely, [illegible], July 21 1921, P. [illegible]/21.

Tel. from Viceroy, July 6 1912, P. 2601/12.

† Letter from Pol. Res. to G. of I., [illegible], Nov. 21 1911, [illegible]

‡ F.O. to I.O., [illegible] 1908, [illegible]

§ Letter from Pol. Res. to G. of I., [illegible], May 23 1914, P. 2309/14.

Letter from Pol. Res. to G. of I., [illegible], May 23 1914, P. 2309/14.

|| Cp. letter from Pol. Res. to G. of I., [illegible] 1908, [illegible]

** Major Daly's Report, Nov. 1921, P. 900/22.

P. 4824/19.



King. In an interview with Sir Arthur Hirtzel on 1st September 1919 he demanded on behalf of Sheikh Isa that the latter should be—

(a) put on an equality with neighbouring Arab rulers in the exercise of authority over all persons other than subjects of Great Britain and the Great European Powers, and so over Arabs other than subjects of Bahrein;

(b) empowered to select the bench of magistrates [under the Bahrein Order in Council the Majlis-el-Urf, or Civil Court, is composed of not less than four members selected by the Political Agent in concert with the Sheikh];

(c) permitted and assisted to develop the port of Zubarah in El Katr, which he claimed had once belonged to Bahrein (Cp. Lorimer: Persian Gulf Gazetteer I. i. 814);

(d) given permission to correspond direct with London, should necessity arise.

Letter from I.O. to G. of I., Sept. 18 1919, P. [illegible]

10. After consideration of the views of Capt. Bray, Major Dickson, then Political Agent, the Political Resident and the Civil Commissioner, Mesopotamia, the Government of India on 5th May 1920* informed Sheikh Abdulla that the procedure for the selection of the members of the Majlis was laid down in the Bahrein Order in Council and that it was not within their competence to alter it, but that in practice the Arab representatives were understood to be appointed by Sheikh Isa, and that although this appointment was subject to the approval of the Political Agent as representing the Protecting Power, the Political Agent would never interfere or refuse his approval without just cause; that as regards his third point, the request was an old one which had received much consideration, and that the Government of India remained unable to accede to it in view of the difficulties involved; while as regards direct correspondence, the political relations of Bahrein were conducted with the Government of India and that it was proper therefore that His Excellency should address them and not His Majesty's Government. They would if necessary forward his correspondence to His Majesty's Government. As regards the first and most important request, the Government of India agreed that he should exercise jurisdiction over the subjects of other Arab rulers, subject to the formal concurrence of those rulers. Ibn Saud†, however, and the Sheikh of Katr, the one previously, the other subsequently, took exception to the exercise of control over their subjects by the Sheikh of Bahrein, and requested the Political Agent to exercise the jurisdiction in question. The Political Agent in consequence issued on 20th November 1920,‡ a notice that all foreign subjects, including Persians and subjects of Arab rulers and Chiefs other than those of Bahrein, were, while in Bahrein, entitled to British protection. The transfer to the Political Agent of jurisdiction over all foreigners did not improve relations between the Political Agent and Sheikh Isa, already none too good as a result of the interference by Government in a dispute between the Sheikh and Ibn Saud as to the duty to be levied on goods proceeding to Hasa, consequent on which Sheikh Isa had been compelled to accept 2 per cent. duty instead of the 5 per cent. which he desired, and in which he regarded Government as having favoured Ibn Saud at his expense.§

* Letter to Sheikh Abdulla, D.O. 1143 K.A., May 5 1920, P. [illegible]

† P. [illegible], Ibn Saud, [illegible] 1920; [illegible] from C.C., Baghdad, to G. of I., [illegible], April 13 1920.

‡ Desp. from Pol. Res. to G. of I., No. [illegible], para. 28, Sept. 1 1927, P. [illegible]/27.

§ Tel. from Pol. Res. to G. of I., [illegible], Sept. 21 1920, P. [illegible]/20.

11. This condition of affairs coincided with an internal crisis of a different character, which was destined to lead up to drastic intervention by His Majesty's Government and the deposition of Sheikh Isa. The difficult situation produced by the Sheikh's misgovernment, and its reactions on the position of Great Britain in the Islands, have already been mentioned. Captain Bray, in May 1919, expressed the opinion that there was in Bahrein a considerable feeling of hostility to His Majesty's Government "due to religious, economical, personal and war reasons," and no British party, and that the activities of the American missionaries were anti-British. Major H. R. P. Dickson, C.I.E., a highly qualified officer with a distinguished record of service in Mesopotamia, who succeeded him as Political Agent, reported in January 1920 that the political situation in Bahrein, while in no way dangerous, was wholly unsatisfactory; that there was a strong and deep-seated anti-British sentiment of long standing, and that British prestige rested on fear and not on respect. The gross oppression "amounting to

Capt. Bray to C.C., Baghdad, May 27 1919, P. [illegible]

‖ Letter from Major Dickson to Pol. Res., & C., Jan. 1920, P. [illegible]



Letter from Pol. Res. to G. of I., 495 S., Dec. 30 1921, P. 522/22.

terrorism" practised by the Sheikhs, and particularly by Sheikh Abdulla, who had ousted Sheikh Hamad from the position he should properly have occupied as heir apparent, formed the subject of various reports by the Political Agent (then Major H. Daly, C.I.E.) in 1921, and led by the end of that year to a deputation to ask for intervention to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf.

* Letter from Pol. Res. to G. of I., 495 S., Dec. 30 1921, P. 522/22.

Major Daly's Report, Nov. 1921.

Tel. from Viceroy to Pol. Res., 110 S., Jan. 30 1922 P. 990/22.

12. The Resident accepted the position, and suggested to the Government of India that a possible solution might be that the Political Agent should be empowered to intervene in cases of gross oppression and give individual protection where necessary.* Earlier in 1921 Sheikh Abdulla had taken alarm at the rising discontent, and Sheikh Isa had appointed his heir, Sheikh Hamad, to take over control under his orders, but the masterful wife of Sheikh Isa had prevented any advance. The attitude of the people became, however, sufficiently alarming to lead Sheikh Hamad and Sheikh Abdulla early in 1922 to take certain minor steps in the direction of reform, and the Government of India, who in January 1922 had stated that they were not prepared to consider drastic intervention until all local resources had been exhausted and intervention was imperative to secure the protection of foreigners and the position of His Majesty's Government in the Islands, and who remained anxious to avoid interference if it could be avoided, informed the Resident in the light of this that while it was most undesirable that they should be drawn into interference between the Sheikh and his subjects, they were prepared to lend their moral support to an honest attempt by the Sheikh to put his scheme into force. They emphasised that nothing should be done to encourage the idea that reforms were being introduced by the Sheikh at the dictation of Government.

G. of I. to Pol. Res., 549 S., May 2 1922.

† F.O. to I.O., Mar. 18 1922.

‡ P. 2228.

13. The reforms, however, proved illusory; the internal situation continued threatening; the Foreign Office, who in March 1922 had urged the taking of immediate steps of reform, in view of the prejudicial effect on the position of His Majesty's Government in Persia of "the present highly unsatisfactory state of affairs in Bahrein,"† again represented the necessity for action, in the interests of the Shiah subjects of the Sheikhs, on 29th May 1922.‡ The Secretary of State for India referred the matter to the Government of India, and they to the Resident in the Gulf. The Political Agent thereupon recommended a postponement of action, partly to enable developments to be watched, partly to appraise the importance of the interest in Bahrein affairs of Ibn Saud, and this recommendation was accepted; but by the end of 1922 the Political Resident was obliged to report that the state of affairs in Bahrein called for reform more urgently than ever, and that Government must be prepared to back up moral pressure by material force if the required reforms were to be carried through.

Pol. Res. to G. of I., Jan. 27 1923, P. 790/23.

§ Tel. from Viceroy to S. of S. for I., 475 S., April 17, P. 1448.

Tel. from Viceroy to S. of S., May 25 1923.

14. Finally, in April 1923,§ the Government of India, who recognised that if the status of Bahrein and our position in the Islands was brought before the League by Persia, "misrule would be the only serious flaw in our case," recommended that if Sheikh Isa could not be persuaded to take the necessary steps himself, he should be deposed, his son Abdulla deported, and the required reforms carried out by the Government of India. His Majesty's Government approved action on these lines, and Sheikh Isa proving obdurate, he was deprived of his control on 26th May 1923, and granted an allowance,‖ and his son, Sheikh Hamad, appointed to act for him "as his father's fully empowered Agent." It was found unnecessary to deport Sheikh Abdulla. Appeals by Sheikh Isa to the High Commissioner for Iraq and the Viceroy, culminating in an appeal in 1925 to the Secretary of State for India, were rejected.

(2) 1923—1928: Sheikh Hamad.

Cp. Pol. Res. Desp. to G. of I. and C.O., 601 S., Nov. 11 1923, P. 4602/23.

15. After a disturbed beginning, the result of the activities of the partisans of the old regime, in the course of which a firm line had to be taken with the (Sunni) Dowasir tribe resident in the north-east of the

‖ Rs. 4,000 per mensem from customs, which for some years he refused to draw (P. 107/25; P. 1193/25; P. 3321/27), and Rs. 2,000 per mensem, in addition to his private income of Rs. 2,500 per mensem (letter from Political Resident to Government of India, 263 S, dated 13th June 1923, P. 2729 A/23).



"ملخص تاريخي للأحداث في أراضي الإمبراطورية العثمانية، فارس وشبه الجزيرة العربية التي تؤثر على الموقف البريطاني في الخليج الفارسي، ١٩٠٧-١٩٢٨" [‎٣٤و] (١٨٨/٧٤)

Island of Bahrein, as a result of which they migrated to Ibn Saud's territory in Hasa, from which they now (1928) show signs of returning, conditions in Bahrein have stabilised themselves under the rule of Sheikh Hamad. But that rule has been substantially rule by the Political Agent. On the recommendation of the Political Resident in the Gulf, the Government of India, with much reluctance, agreed in 1923 to the permanent appointment of a British Director of Customs (this on the request of the Sheikhs—post filled January 1924), and the raising of a small force to maintain order (raised 1924, changed to an armed police force, in 1926, under a British officer); while in 1926 a European Adviser was appointed to deal with judicial, financial and general administration. All these officials were, in fact, appointed on the recommendation and with the approval of Government, though they are the servants of the Sheikhs and formally appointed by them.

P. 21/27, and Pol. Res. letter to G. of I., Mar. 27 1927, P. 2222.

P. 2089/24, 2487/25.

16. The correspondence which has passed since 1923 between the Government of India and the Political Resident in the Gulf shows increasing reluctance on the part of the former to assume full responsibility for the control of Bahrein, or to do more than carry the Sheikh wholeheartedly with them in the path of reform while avoiding the "Westernisation" of his State. It is understood that in pursuance of this policy they have had under consideration the diminution of the overt signs of British influence in Bahrein; that the European Director of Customs has now been given a year's notice and will not be replaced; that the European police officer may also be dispensed with, and that an ultimate concentration under a single competent European, such as the present Financial Adviser, of direct responsibility for their Departments is in contemplation.

1. Tel. from G. of I. to Pol. Res., 624 S., May 14 1923, P. 1926/23.
2. Ditto, 3208 S., Dec. 4 1923, P. 42/24.
3. Letter from Pol. Res. to G. of I., 712 S., Dec. 21 1925, P. 487/26.

17. In the discussions between the Sheikhs and the Political Agent which took place consequent on the reassertion in December 1927 of the Persian claim to Bahrein, it is satisfactory to be able to record that while Sheikh Isa remained sensitive regarding the maintenance of his internal independence, Sheikh Hamad, the *de facto* ruler, Sheikh Abdulla, and also Sheikh Salman, the eldest son of Sheikh Hamad, are stated by the Political Resident to have displayed anxiety, in their own interests, to admit to the full the protection of Great Britain.

Pol. Res. to G. of I., March 30 1928, P. 2442.

18. The policy of His Majesty's Government in Bahrein is one of the points for consideration by the present Sub-Committee, and on the decision on it must turn the decision on the degree of interference and control to be exercised over the internal administration of the Islands. But it is pertinent to quote the remarks of the Political Resident in the Gulf, made though they were before the situation was modified by the reassertion of the Persian claim to suzerainty, in his Despatch* of 1st September 1927:—

"We cannot lose Bahrein. But, notwithstanding our outwardly strong position in the Islands, a single serious quarrel with Sheikhs Isa and Hamad, a quarrel engineered by Ibn Saud on religious grounds, or through Persia on political grounds, and we should have to vacate our privileged position or force ourselves on the principality in the face of the world against the wishes of its rulers."

* To G. of I., No. 250 S., para. 57, P. 5695/27.

C.—Oil in Bahrein.

19. The Sheikh agreed in 1914 not to grant an oil concession without the approval of His Majesty's Government. The question of obtaining a concession was revived by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, who appear originally to have raised it in 1918, in 1921. Negotiations on their behalf were undertaken with the Sheikh of Bahrein through the Political Resident, but agreement proved impracticable, and in the event a concession, granting an exclusive exploration licence for a period not exceeding two years, subject to renewal by the Sheikh, acting on the advice of the Political Resident, for certain further periods, was signed by the Sheikh of Bahrein (also with the approval of His Majesty's Government) in favour of the Eastern and General Syndicate on 2nd December 1925. It was decided in 1928 to advise the Sheikh that all future agreements with oil companies should contain a clause to the effect that no alienation of rights whatever could be made, except with the sanction of the Sheikh and the approval of His Majesty's Government. (The general question of oil in the Gulf is dealt with in the Board of Trade Memorandum on page 157.)

Pol. Res. to F.O., Aug. 4 1928, P. 4617.



D.—External Relations of Bahrein (other than with His Majesty's Government) 1908–1928.

20. During this period the dominating and almost the only question affecting the external relations of Bahrein remains that of its status *vis-à-vis* Turkey and Persia.

I.—Turkey and Bahrein.

21. An agreement between Great Britain and Turkey, signed on 29th July 1913, as part of the general negotiations between His Majesty's Government and the Ottoman Government, but, like the other agreements concluded in the course of these negotiations, awaiting ratification on the outbreak of war, finally disposed of the Turkish claim to suzerainty, which must in any event have been practically effected by Ibn Saud's capture of Hasa in 1913. By Article 13 of the Anglo-Turkish Convention the Ottoman Government renounced all their claims to the Islands of Bahrein, the independence of which they recognised; His Majesty's Government declaring on their part that they had no intention of annexing the island. His Majesty's Government undertook in Article 11 of the same Convention not to allow the Sheikh of Bahrein to disturb the autonomy of the peninsula of El Katr, or to annex it, and in Article 14 that the Sheikh should not discriminate against Ottoman subjects in the matter of dues levied upon pearl fisheries, while the Turkish Government accepted a reservation of the right of the population of Bahrein to visit Zakhnuniyeh Island for fishing, and recognised the right of subjects of the Sheikh to British consular protection in Turkey. Owing to the outbreak of war, the agreement in question was never ratified; but the Turkish claim to Bahrein would seem to have disappeared with the disappearance of the Turkish Empire and the elimination of Turkey from the Persian Gulf, and no endeavour has been made to revive it since the end of the war.

II.—Persia and Bahrein.

(a) 1908–1922.

22. Despite the nine repudiations enumerated in the Foreign Office Memorandum of 1908, the Persian claim was kept alive in the years 1908–14. Representations made by His Majesty's Minister at Tehran to the Persian Government in 1908 in regard to the punishment of a Bahrein subject at Lingah,* produced the reply that instructions had been sent to Lingah "to make reparation and do the man justice," but that, as to the question of Bahrein, the Minister "will admit that the proprietary right of the Persian Government over the Island is not a matter to be disputed." Considerable subsequent discussion took place with the Persian Government, with a view to the withdrawal of this Note or the modification of its terms. In view of the fact that His Majesty's Government considered it inopportune to raise the question of Bahrein in its general aspect, a somewhat gentler line was taken with the Persian Government than was perhaps altogether consistent with the attitude adopted before and since by His Majesty's Government; and it was only after unsuccessful efforts to secure the substitution of a modified version that the Persian Note was returned as inadmissible to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.† The Persian Foreign Office thereupon declared that, if the Note returning the objectionable communication could be withdrawn, the Persian Government would send in substitution for the latter an amended Note in the sense desired, adding that, if this arrangement was not accepted, they would be obliged to send a strong reply to the British Note. The Minister remarked that this would have raised the general question of Bahrein, for which the moment was clearly inopportune, and that he had therefore accepted the proposed arrangement. The amended Note was accepted, and the matter closed with a Note from His Majesty's Minister dated the 13th May 1909, acknowledging receipt and reaffirming that His Majesty's Government maintained, as regards the status of Bahreinis in Persia, the position that the Island of Bahrein and its inhabitants were under British protection, and that they would be guided entirely by their own views of the position should any action of the Persian Government make representations necessary.

* Tel. no. 86, April 11 1908.

† Tel. Desp. 10 of Jan. 23 1909.



(35)

23. Early in 1910 the Persian Government assimilated the formalities to be fulfilled in the case of persons visiting Bahrein to those prescribed in the case of travellers to Persian ports, a measure which, as pointed out by the Foreign Office at the time, constituted a fresh attempt to assert Persian sovereignty over the Island.‡ It was agreed that, in view of the desirability of avoiding raising of the general question, no protest should be made.

24. In July 1910 the Political Resident reported†† that internal Persian coastal passes issued to Persians proceeding to Bahrein from Persian ports were visaed by a Persian merchant residing in Bahrein, who was also in the habit of issuing similar passes ("Ilm-o-khabar") to Persians proceeding from Bahrein to Persian ports, and His Majesty's Government approved a proposal that the merchant in question, Abdul Nabi, should be expelled from the Island.§ For various reasons it proved necessary to suspend action on this authority, but in 1912 Abdul Nabi was forbidden to take any action in regard to the endorsement of passes held by Persian subjects for travel in Bahrein. The endorsements in question were, however, thenceforth granted by the Political Agent, a practice, as pointed out by the Political Resident nine years later,‖ "of itself open to objection, as it might be construed into a tacit admission that the Persian passport authorities are justified in giving passes for another Persian port to persons going to Bahrein."

25. Efforts made by His Majesty's Government in 1913 to secure Persian recognition of our right to protect Bahreinis and subjects of the Trucial Chiefs as a condition precedent to the granting to Persia of the loan then under negotiation proved unavailing.**

(b) 1922-1927.

26. There were no fresh developments of importance until after the war. In the year 1922 His Britannic Majesty's Consul at Bandar Abbas reported that the Persian passport officials at Lingah,* at which port British India Steam Navigation Company's vessels put in from Bahrein, had ruled that Bahreinis were Persian subjects and should be given Persian passports. They seized two British certificates of identity granted to Bahrein subjects, but on representations being made by the Minister at Tehran, instructions were given by the Central Government that there was to be no repetition of this incident. In the same year, His Majesty's Minister suggested that Persians going to Bahrein should be required to obtain British visas or passes, and should be turned back if they had not got them, a procedure the adoption of which was recommended by the Political Agent, who regarded it as feasible. It was subjected accordingly to examination by the Government of India and the Foreign Office, with the results shown below. In 1922 also the Persian delegate at a Postal Conference held at Bushire, while not for the moment pressing for the transfer to Persia of the Bahrein post office, stated that his action was without prejudice to Persian claims to Bahrein.†

27. At about the same time a Press campaign for the return of Bahrein to Persia and for its direct representation in the Majlis was started in the Persian papers. This discussion culminated in a motion in the Majlis to give Bahrein the right to return a Member, a demand for the immediate discussion of which was rejected, but which was referred to a Commission for report.‡ His Majesty's Government, in the light of this development, decided that it was desirable to instruct the Minister at Tehran to address a formal Note to the Persian Government, in terms similar to those employed in 1906, and considered the question of asking the Admiralty to despatch a vessel to show the Flag in the neighbourhood of Bahrein. The Government of India concurred in the action proposed, and expressed the view that, if a Note was presented, the withdrawal of passport measures should be included, remarking (doubtless with the proposals on the subject of the Minister at Tehran in mind) that, whether a Note was presented or not, they saw no objection to retaliatory measures requiring visitors to Bahrein to take out a British visa.§ They added, however, that the critical internal situation in Persia made it doubtful whether the present moment was opportune for action. At about the same time the Persian Government instructed its



officials in the Gulf to treat Bahreinis as Persian subjects, and the Persian Vice-Consul at Nejf issued a notice to the effect that Bahreinis should register at his Consulate and obtain passports.‖

‖ Tel. from Viceroy to S. of S., 893, S., June 20 1923, P. 2337/23; Tel. tel. to F.O., 125, July 14 1923, P. 3024a/23.

28. The serious internal situation in Persia made it necessary to postpone action on the lines approved by His Majesty's Government, and temporarily to drop the proposal, in which the India Office had concurred,¶ to take retaliatory action in the matter of passports should the Persian Government not withdraw the instructions they had issued on that question to their officials in the Gulf.

¶ I.O. to F.O. July 11 1923, P. 2471/23.

29. No further steps were taken until September 1923, when the Persian Government were informed that the Island was now a British Protectorate, and that His Majesty's Government did not contemplate any alteration of its status—a declaration met by a statement by the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs that the Government of which he was a member had no intention of laying claim to Bahrein on behalf of Persia. This did not prevent the Minister for Foreign Affairs from again raising the question in the following month in a conversation in the course of which Sir Percy Loraine tentatively suggested, in his personal capacity, the possibility of putting the matter to arbitration, a suggestion for making which he was sharply rebuked by the Foreign Office, and from which nothing resulted.

30. Between 1923 and 1927 there was a lull, and no point of real importance arose. His Majesty's Government were reluctant to face the question of the status of Bahrein, and in consequence adopted in general an accommodating attitude so far as possible on minor questions. Thus, on the vexed question of the use by Bahreinis of Persian passports and travelling passes (Ilm-o-Khabar), agreement was reached in 1925** that Bahrein subjects should not be subjected to the new Persian passport regulations, the production of an Ilm-o-Khabar sufficing, and His Majesty's Government, despite the apparent concession of principle involved in the recognition of the Ilm-o-Khabar, decided in 1927 tacitly to acquiesce in this —partly on the ground that the recognition of these documents could be ignored, since they were also being issued by Persia in the case of Koweit, the status of which was not in dispute;* to let the question of independent Bahreini passports lie; and to allow the matter generally to rest unless it was revived by Persian action.† There were no developments until June 1928, when the refusal of the Persian Consul at Basra to visa the pass of a Bahreini—an incident now under examination—again raised the question.††

** Tel. Desp. to F.O. 374, Oct. 31 1925, P. 73/26.

* Pol. of R. to I.O., Sept. 8 1927, P. 4073/27.

† F.O. to I.O., Nov. 3 1927, P. 5120/27.

†† C.O. to I.O., July 21 1928, I.O. to F.O., Aug. 17 1928, P. 3913; 4065/28.

31. In September 1928, the Political Resident, on learning that a Persian residing at Bahrein was endorsing Persian Ilm-o-Khabar for Persians for the return journey to Persia, instructed the Political Agent to tell the Sheikh to issue orders that no one bearing such documents would be allowed to land, and to inform the offender who was issuing endorsements that he was usurping the powers of a Government official, which could be performed only with the consent of the Sheikh, and that he would be requested to leave the island unless he desisted. The vigorous reassertion of the Persian claim to Bahrein dealt with below renders it desirable to keep a vigilant watch for any action which might be construed or represented by Persia as an admission of their claim to suzerainty over Bahrein, and while it is not clear how persons carrying Ilm-o-Khabar are to be identified on landing, Sir Lionel Haworth's action is not inopportune at a time when there are indications of an inclination on the part of Persia to assert a shadowy claim to suzerainty over the States of the Arab littoral by requiring that their nationals shall take out Persian passports or travelling passes.

Tel. from Pol. Res. to S. of S. for I., Sept. 19 1928, P. 5100.

Pol. Res. to S. of S. for I., Sept. 17, P. 5096/28.

32. It may be mentioned at this point that the Belgian Administrator-General of the Persian Customs stated early in 1928 that "about four years ago" he had been taken to task by the Government of the day for imposing customs duties on goods imported from Bahrein to Persia; and that he had replied that "customs dues had always been so levied . . . and that before they could be abandoned . . . the Persian Government would have to institute a customs control at Bahrein itself."‡

‡ Tel. Desp. 32, Jan. 27 1928, P. 876/28.



(36)

REASSERTION OF PERSIAN CLAIM AND APPEAL TO LEAGUE, 1927.

33. The deposition of Sheikh Isa by His Majesty's Government in 1923, and the subsequent increase in the degree of active British influence, emphasised the position publicly taken in Bahrein by His Majesty's Government, but the Persian claim was not again actively reasserted until the text of the Treaty of Jeddah, concluded with Ibn Saud on 20th May 1927, in which Bahrein was referred to as having "special Treaty relations" with His Majesty's Government, provoked a strong protest by Persia, copies of which were despatched to the League of Nations with a request for circulation.†† The Persian protest was based largely on an alleged recognition of Persian sovereignty over Bahrein in a Note dated 29th April 1869, from the Earl of Clarendon, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. A reasoned reply to the Persian Note, which (after a brief delay in the hope that an arrangement might be reached with Persia) was equally communicated to, and circulated by, the League, was despatched by His Majesty's Government on 18th January 1928. Suffice it to say that His Majesty's Government, while avoiding any definite statement as to their own position in Bahrein or its basis, again repudiated the Persian claim in the strongest terms.

†† Tel. [illegible] Nov. 20 1927.

34. The Government of India, who but for the Persian protest would have inclined to favour a proposal of the Political Resident, under consideration at the time of its receipt, that His Majesty's Government should set the seal on their position in Bahrein by a formal treaty of protection, provided that this was not precluded by wider considerations of foreign policy, recognised the tactical objections to such action in face of Persia's appeal to the League.§ They commended, in the circumstances, a proposal by Sir L. Haworth that the Sheikhs should be apprised of Persia's claim and encouraged to give a power of attorney to His Majesty's Government to defend their independence at Geneva, and if possible state their dependence on our protection. This latter proposal was approved by His Majesty's Government‖ on the understanding that no pressure of any kind should be brought to bear on the Sheikh to secure the documents. His Majesty's Government added that, in their view, the desirability of stressing the "dependence on our protection" of the Sheikhs was doubtful, and suggested that the point could better be disposed of by reference to the special treaty relations of the Sheikhs with His Majesty's Government.

§ Viceroy's tel., Dec. [illegible] 1927, P. [illegible]

‖ Tel. from S. of S. for I. to Viceroy, [illegible] Jan. [illegible] 1928.

35. The Political Resident reported on 19th March 1928¶ that he had obtained a letter from Sheikhs Isa and Hamad appointing His Majesty's Government, in accordance with their treaties, "to defend Bahrein from outside interference," and to act as their agents in rebutting the Persian claims, and that the Sheikhs proposed to send Sheikh Mohammed, brother of Sheikh Hamad and son of Isa, as their representative in answering the claim should the case be taken to Geneva. The Resident added that no pressure had been brought to bear to obtain this document, but that now that matters had gone so far with the Sheikhs any compromise with Persia on the basis of the *status quo* would have a very undesirable and unsettling effect on them, and that a definite disposal of the matter, by Persian withdrawal of the case or its reference to the League, was necessary.

¶ Viceroy's tel. [illegible] P. [illegible]

36. There seemed at an earlier stage some reason to believe that the Persian Note to His Majesty's Government was designed rather to prevent their claim from lapsing *sub silentio* than in the hope of any positive result, and that the Persian Government regretted the reference to the League.** The question has come up several times in the course of the recent negotiations with Persia, when Sir R. Clive has uniformly made it clear that there is no prospect of His Majesty's Government resiling from the position taken in the Note of reply. A formal answer to that Note has, however, now been made by Persia,†† and communicated to the League of Nations, and it seems clear that the claim is to be pressed. The Persian answer is, broadly speaking, based on the claims that Persian suzerainty over Bahrein was recognised by His Majesty's Government in 1869—a contention disposed of in the Note sent to Persia in January 1928—and that a *sine qua non* of

** Cp. Tel. [illegible] 1927, para. [illegible]

†† Tel. [illegible] to F.O. [illegible] Aug. [illegible] 1928, P. [illegible]



the independence of Bahrein is the recognition of such independence by the former Sovereign State—Persia, an act which has never taken place. No reply to the Note has yet been sent by His Majesty's Government.

37. Till this latest development, despite much activity in the Persian Press,* and the encouragements of the Soviet Ambassador in Tehran,† there seemed little real probability that the matter would be pursued at Geneva. If, however, the latest communication should make this inevitable, not only can the paper arguments be strengthened by the addition of miscellaneous evidence which has come to light since the British *Note* of January 1928 was drafted, but the presence of a representative of the Sheikhs will carry some weight. The difficulty in present circumstances of the establishment by Persia of effective control in Bahrein, even should her suzerainty *per impossibile* be admitted in the island, makes it perhaps more probable that she will endeavour merely to use the question as a pawn in the forthcoming negotiations. In that event consideration will have to be given to the remarks of the Political Resident quoted above as to the necessity for a definite decision and the undesirability of a compromise on the basis of the *status quo*, remarks recently reinforced by unofficial statements by the Financial Adviser in Bahrein (Mr. Belgrave) as to the apprehensions of the Sheikhs lest His Majesty's Government should sacrifice their interests to Persia as the price of an accommodation on matters of purely British concern. From the point of view of His Majesty's Government, a settlement which would enable us to avoid public examination and discussion of our position in the Islands is to be desired.

III.—Ibn Saud and Bahrein.

(a) 1913-1923.

38. Ibn Saud's contact with Bahrein commenced with his capture of Hasa from the Turks in 1913. Under the Treaty concluded with His Majesty's Government on 26th December 1915, Ibn Saud undertook, "as his Fathers did before him, to refrain from all aggression on or interference with the territories of . . . Bahrein . . ." During the war he established a commercial forwarding agency in Bahrein (the Qusaibi) and began to take some interest at Bahrein; in 1919 the Political Agent found it necessary to bring pressure to bear on Sheikh Isa to secure an equitable settlement of a dispute which had arisen owing to the imposition by the Sheikh of customs duties on goods passing through Bahrein in transit to Hasa and Nejd; at the end of July 1920 the Political Adviser, Bahrein, reported that Sheikh Salim of Koweit had recently been in touch with Sheikh Isa, it was suggested with a view to securing his adherence to the movement against Ibn Saud which he was then fomenting—though nothing appears to have come of this; while in 1922 Ibn Saud encouraged the recalcitrant Dowasir Bahrein tribe by offering them sanctuary in Hasa, an offer accepted on the abandonment of Bahrein by the tribe after the deposition of Sheikh Isa in 1923.‡ At the moment of the deposition of the Sheikh (April 1923) Ibn Saud's agent had achieved an objectionable prominence in the Nejdi-Persian rioting which took place at Bahrein; and His Majesty's Government finally approved a proposal by the Political Resident that he should be removed from Bahrein by being sent to Ibn Saud with a letter complaining of his conduct, requesting the Sultan to deal with the case, and asking that His Highness, before sending another Agent to Bahrein, should arrange to secure the concurrence of His Majesty's Government in his choice. A formal protest by Ibn Saud against this action was disposed of by the Political Resident, who refused to compromise, and the Qusaibi was finally allowed to return to Bahrein on a clearer understanding as to his position and functions.

(b) 1923-1928.

39. There were no developments of importance between 1923 and 1927. When the Treaty of Jeddah was in negotiation with Ibn Saud in 1927, His Majesty's Government and the Government of India were anxious to secure from the King of the Hejaz and Nejd an undertaking similar to that embodied in the Treaty of 1915 and quoted in para. 38 above. His Majesty would not, however, go beyond an undertaking "to maintain friendly and peaceful

* Cp. Teh. Desp. 75, Feb. 8 1928, P. 78/28.

† Cp. Teh. Desp. 207, May 8 1928.

B. 349, para. 15.

‡ Letter from Pol. Res. to G. of I., [illegible], June 23 1922, P. [illegible]; letter from Pol. Res. to G. of I., [illegible], July 10 1922, P. [illegible].

Tel. from C.O. to Pol. Res., [illegible], May [illegible] 1923, P. [illegible]; Pol. Res. to S. of S. for I., [illegible], May 19 1923, P. [illegible].

Desp. from Pol. Res. to C.O., [illegible], June 23 1923, P. [illegible].



relations with the territories of . . . Bahrein . . ." There is no evidence at the moment of a more positive interest in Bahrein on the part of Ibn Saud; but there is little question that he and the Wahabi movement, and not Persia, is the real danger; that as matters stand he is our natural successor if we abandon our present position in Bahrein, that his power is appreciated and feared by the Sheikhs, and that an active development of Wahabism on the North Arabian coast, coupled with bad relations with the King of the Hejaz and Nejd, might react embarrassingly on our position in Bahrein. The remarks of Sheikh Hamad in April 1927, that "Ibn Saud was the one big Arab Ruler, and it was natural for all the smaller Sheikhs such as himself to look up to him and try to please him,"* are symptomatic.

* Letter from P.A., Bahrein, to Pol. Res., C/53 April 14 1927, P. 8804/27.

E.—Summary.

40. **Internally,** the last 20 years have seen the consolidation of British influence in Bahrein. The Sheikh has agreed to grant neither oil nor pearling concessions without the sanction of His Majesty's Government; jurisdiction over foreigners in the islands has passed from the Ruler to the Political Agent; internal misrule has been checked by the deposition of Sheikh Isa, the substitution of Sheikh Hamad, and the provision for the new Sheikh of competent and disinterested European advisers under his orders.

41. **Externally,** the claim to suzerainty of **Turkey** has lapsed.

The claims of **Persia** have constantly been reasserted, and as constantly repudiated by His Majesty's Government, over the period now in question. They are at the moment under argument, and have acquired a new importance by their reference to the League of Nations. Present indications are that Persia is likely to press them, and the desirability, in the interests of the Sheikhs, who have appointed His Majesty's Government their agents in the matter, and on whom a compromise with Persia on the basis of the *status quo* would, according to the Political Resident, have a very unsettling effect of securing a decision which will finally dispose of them internationally, is for the consideration of His Majesty's Government.

The rise of **Ibn Saud** is, however, the development most pregnant with possibility in the external relations of Bahrein. The King of the Hejaz and Nejd has not so far actively interested himself in the islands; and the fact that the power which he has built up may not survive his death cannot be ignored. But, on the assumption of the survival of the existing state of things in Nejd, the present Memorandum (para. 39) makes the suggestion that it is Ibn Saud and the Wahabi movement, rather than Persia, that represent the real danger from a practical standpoint, and that were His Majesty's Government for any reason to abandon their present position in Bahrein, Ibn Saud would, as matters stand, be their natural successor.

Position in Bahrein of His Majesty's Government.

42. While, however, His Majesty's Government, as stated above, have over the past 20 years established a *de facto* control of the Islands of Bahrein, *de jure* their position is no stronger than before. At the same time, the importance of establishing that position on a stable basis has very greatly increased since 1908. From the naval standpoint, Bahrein, although it has been suggested, as a *pis aller*, as a naval base or a coaling depôt, has the disadvantage of unhealthy climate and relative remoteness from the exit of the Gulf and so from the probable scene of naval operations in the event of war.* The Air Ministry† regard it, however, as of great potential importance from the standpoint of British air interests—not only because of its geographical position on the route to India, but because the isolation of the islands from the mainland, and the long-established influence in them of His Majesty's Government render them less likely to be disturbed by anti-British rumours than other places on the Arabian coast. The Government of India (substantial Indian commercial interests in Bahrein apart) take the view that Bahrein as a central air base and political centre for the control of the increasingly important Arab littoral may be regarded as a key position inside the Gulf of an importance at least equal to that of Muscat at its mouth. The probability that Persia will press her efforts to terminate British influence on the south Persian coast, the necessity, should

* Admiralty to C.O., Jan. 29 1908, P. 346.

† A.M. to C.O., Dec. 28 1927, P. 8/28.



those efforts succeed, of consolidating that influence on the Arab littoral, and the possibility that the removal of the headquarters of the Political Resident from Bushire may have to be considered, all combine to invest Bahrein with an importance very substantially greater than in 1908 from the standpoint of His Majesty's Government.

43. On the assumption, then, that Imperial considerations, our obligations to the Sheikh apart, make it desirable for His Majesty's Government to maintain and consolidate their position in Bahrein, the question arises of how this is to be achieved. The matter is one which calls for careful handling. On the one hand, Persia has appealed to the League, on the Council of which she is now represented, and there is a possibility that she may endeavour to make a compromise on Bahrein a condition precedent to agreement with His Majesty's Government on other Gulf questions. On the other hand, it appears that a compromise, even on the basis of the maintenance of the *status quo*, would have a definitely unsettling effect on the Sheikhs, who are suspicious that His Majesty's Government may use them as pawns to secure concessions from Persia of value to Great Britain only; that a decision which will definitely dispose internationally of the Persian claim is therefore desirable; and that, while the deposed Sheikh Isa remains sensitive regarding the maintenance of internal independence, the *de facto* ruler, his heir, and his brother, are anxious, in the face of Persian claims, to admit to the full the protection of Great Britain. It may perhaps be assumed that if the Persian claim could be disposed of before His Majesty's Government had finally consolidated their position, much stronger opposition to such consolidation might be expected from the ruling family, and this appears to make it desirable to seize the present opportunity to establish the British position once for all.

44. The simplest method of at once asserting internationally the British view of the status of Bahrein and establishing the position in the islands of His Majesty's Government *vis-à-vis* the Sheikh, would probably on the whole be the conclusion of a formal treaty of protection, a course under consideration in India (see para. 34 above) at the time of the reassertion of the Persian claim last year. Had Persia been prepared to abandon her claim in deference to His Majesty's Government, the Treaty with Bahrein could have been concluded simultaneously with its abandonment. But as she is undoubtedly not prepared to compromise, such a treaty could only be concluded in the face of Persian protests to the League and elsewhere, and the wider considerations of international policy involved in its conclusion would call for close examination before a decision is taken regarding it.

An alternative method of solution might be arbitration, to which various objections are obvious.

F.—Points referred to in connection with Persian Gulf Sub-Committee.

45. The points in connection with Bahrein which have been specifically mentioned in connection with the deliberations of the Persian Gulf Sub-Committee are:—

(*a*) Persian claims to suzerainty—degree of control to be exercised by His Majesty's Government (P.G. 6, 2 (*a*) (12)).

(*b*) Steps necessary on the North Arabian coast in connection with the protection of the pearl-fisheries at Bahrein (P.G. 6, 2 (*c*) (3)).

(*c*) Question of extent to which His Majesty's Government should increase or decrease interest taken and control exercised by them in Bahrein (P.G. 6, 2 (*c*) (5)).

(*d*) Whether the existing coaling stations at Kishm and Henjam can without disadvantage be moved to Bahrein (P.G. 1st Minutes: Conclusions).

G.—Views expressed by Government of India.

46. The Government of India have expressed the view that the maintenance of the independence of Bahrein, as of Muscat, Koweit, and the Trucial Chiefs, is necessary. "Our veiled protectorate over them suffices against European encroachments. So long as we do not alienate Arab opinion by undue Westernisation . . . it suffices also against encroachments by the Wahabi State. At need it can be more explicitly asserted."

Tel. from Viceroy to S. of S. for I., No. 1426 S., July 23 1928, P.G. 8.



KOWEIT, 1908-1928.

(*Communicated by India Office and revised to 1st October* 1928.)

A.—Administration.

1. Sheikh Ahmad-al Jabir, C.I.E. (January 1922), born 1885, has ruled Koweit since March 1921, when his succession to his uncle, Sheikh Salim (born 1864, succeeded 1917, died 23rd February 1921), who had ruled since the death of Sheikh Jabir Ibn Mabarak in 1917, was recognised by His Majesty's Government, subject, it would appear, to agreement to impose and enforce through his territory such further restrictions on the arms traffic as might be considered desirable. On the invitation of His Majesty's Government, the Sheikh visited the United Kingdom in October 1919, as the representative of his uncle, with the son of Ibn Saud, and was received by the King. His Excellency is entitled to a permanent salute of seven guns, the number having been reduced from 12 (personal) on his accession.

2. The principality is an independent Arab State, under British protection, but not a British protectorate.* Its ruler is precluded by his engagements, of which an abstract is printed in the Précis of Treaties appended to this Memorandum, from receiving foreign representatives, and from ceding, leasing, mortgaging, or giving for occupation, or any other purpose, any portion of its territory to any foreigner or foreign Power without the sanction of His Majesty's Government; he is bound to suppress slave traffic and to prohibit traffic in arms within his territories; and he has agreed not to give a concession for oil, or for pearl fishing, without the approval of His Majesty's Government.

3. The internal administration is conducted by the Sheikh, assisted in theory by an elected Council of Advisers (two from the Subah or reigning family, four from the inhabitants, elected for one year), acceptance of which was made for the first time a condition of recognition by the people of Koweit on the accession of the present Sheikh.† The Council, though duly elected, has, however, never met.‡

4. His Majesty's Government and the Government of India are represented by the Political Agent (at present Major J. C. More, D.S.O.), an appointment created in 1904, maintained since that date save for a brief interval in 1905, and borne on the cadre of the Indian Political Department. The Political Agent is directly subordinate to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf. He does not hold His Majesty's Commission as a Consul or exercise Consular functions. Under the Koweit Order in Council of 1925 (see paras. 24-27 below), he is the District Magistrate and Sessions Judge, and exercises his powers subject to the jurisdiction of the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf; the limits of his jurisdiction are the territories and territorial waters of Koweit, and he exercises jurisdiction *inter alios* over British subjects and protected persons, and over the subjects and protected persons (not being subjects or protected persons of Muslim Governments) of Foreign States in respect of whom the Foreign States concerned may agree to the exercise of such jurisdiction.

5. The effect of the recommendations of the Masterton-Smith Committee of 1921 was to leave control of the internal administration and affairs of Koweit to the Government of India (to whom, and not to His Majesty's Government, the Political Resident in the Gulf was instructed in 1924 to look for orders regarding them), subject to the general control of His Majesty's Government, and to the prior concurrence of the Colonial Office in matters of political significance. Questions of policy, especially questions affecting relations with Ibn Saud, fell to be dealt with by the Colonial Office. The question of the channels through which the instructions of His Majesty's Government are to issue on matters affecting the Principality is dealt with in para. 5 of the Note on Political Control in the Persian Gulf on page 40.

6. Expenditure on Koweit is divided between His Majesty's Government and the Government of India. In the latest year for which figures are available (1926-7) it amounted to Rs. 45,683, *plus* payments in respect of pension contribution amounting to Rs. 9,423, a total of Rs. 55,106.



B.—History of Koweit Affairs, 1908–28.

(1).—1908–19.

7. The history of Koweit up to 1907 is given in the Foreign Office Memorandum of 1908. At the time when that memorandum was composed and until the beginning of the War, Koweit was of vital interest to Great Britain in connection with the Baghdad Railway, and during the period 1908–14 His Majesty's Government, in their relations with the Sheikh, had primarily in view the consolidation of their position and influence in Koweit in the face of the efforts of Germany to establish herself at the head of the Gulf.

Secret Desp. from India, 108, Sept. 10 1908, P. 1808/08.

8. The vexed question of the rights of the Sheikh of Koweit over the islands of Bubiyan and Warba, dealt with in the Foreign Office Memorandum, was carefully investigated by the local authorities and the Government of India in 1907–9. The conclusions which emerged were that enquiry had gone far to establish the claims of the Sheikh to the ownership of Bubiyan, but that no satisfactory evidence had been produced as to his claims to Warba; and in the circumstances His Majesty's Government decided that it was inadvisable to raise any question of the rights of the Sheikh to either island. (Both islands were recognised as falling within the dominions of the Sheikh of Koweit by the Anglo-Turkish Agreement of 29th July 1913.)

Secret Desp. to G. of I., 8, April 8 1910, P. 3130/10.

Secret Desp. from G. of I., 89, May 27 1909, P. 804/09.

Desp. from Sir G. Lowther to F.O., 296, May 29 1909, P. 2611/09.

Desp. from Sir G. Lowther to Sir E. Grey, 652, Sept. 18 1910, P. 4012/10.

9. Between 1909 and 1911 the attitude of the Turkish authorities in the Basra Vilayet, who placed difficulties in the way of the registration of property acquired in their jurisdiction by the Sheikh unless His Excellency would consent to describe himself as a Turkish subject—an attitude which inevitably raised the wider question of the status of Koweit, gave rise to considerable correspondence, in the course of which His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople was instructed to make clear the views on that matter of His Majesty's Government. Circumstances, however, intervened to make an immediate *démarche* by Sir G. Lowther from time to time unnecessary or undesirable, and the question merged in the general Anglo-Turkish negotiations initiated in 1911.

P. 2002/11.

10. The Sheikh undertook in 1911 not to grant a pearl fishing concession to foreigners save with the prior approval of His Majesty's Government, and gave a similar undertaking as regards oil in 1913. Subsequent developments as regards oil concessions are dealt with in para. 29 below. With the assistance of a loan of £12,500 from the Government of India, arrangements were made in 1914 for the installation by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, on behalf of the Sheikh, of a water distilling plant, which was not, however, brought into operation until 1919.*

* P. 4254/14 (et seq.), P. 2442/18, P. 3367/18.

11. The question of Koweit played an important part in the Anglo-Turkish negotiations of 1911–14. An agreement was reached, and a Convention, to give effect to it, signed on 29th July 1913. Under this agreement, in the terms of which the concurrence of the Sheikh had been secured, the territory of Koweit was recognised as an autonomous caza of the Ottoman Empire; the Ottoman flag was to be flown by the Sheikh, but he was to have the right to insert a distinctive emblem in the corner; he was to continue to be a Turkish Kaimakam, and his successors were to be appointed to a similar position by the Ottoman Government; the full administrative autonomy of the Sheikh was recognised within the territories of Koweit proper, the limits of which were defined by the red circle on Map No. II appended to this Memorandum; within a surrounding area (included within a green line on the map) which was occupied by tribes recognised as dependent on him, he was, as in the past, to continue to levy tribute and to perform the administrative duties of Turkish Kaimakam; in both regions Turkey undertook to abstain entirely from any interference, though the right to appoint a Commissioner at Koweit "to protect the interests and subjects of other parts of the Empire" was secured to her; existing agreements between the Sheikh and His Majesty's Government, including the Secret Agreement of 1899, were recognised by the Ottoman Government, and His Majesty's Government engaged that so long as no change was made in the *status quo* as now defined, they would not alter the



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nature of British relations with the Government of Koweit or establish a Protectorate there. A subsidiary article (9) secured to the Sheikh the enjoyment of his private property in the Basra Vilayet.

12. The outbreak of war in August 1914 prevented the final ratification of the Anglo-Turkish Agreement the substance of which is summarised above, and the entry of Turkey into the War in November 1914 against the Allies produced a completely new situation. The Sheikh, who had been informed officially on 8th August 1914 of the outbreak of war between Great Britain and Germany, on 21st August made a declaration of loyalty to His Majesty's Government on behalf of himself and his tribes,* placed "his efforts, his men, and his ships" at the disposal of Great Britain, and expressed a desire to eject the Turkish garrison from the islands at the mouth of the Shatt-el-Arab, which he claimed to be lawfully his. In return for his co-operation against the Turks the Sheikh, in a letter from the Political Resident in the Gulf, dated 3rd November 1914,† was given the following assurances, of which the third is the most important:—

(1) The date gardens which you now possess between Fao and Gurnah shall remain in the full possession of you and your heirs and be immune from taxation.

(2) You are guaranteed by the Great British Government against all consequences of your attack against Safwan, Umm Kasr and Bubiyan.

(3) Koweit shall be recognised as an independent principality under British protection.

13. In February 1915 sanction was given to the transfer to Koweit of the Admiralty coaling depot at Bushire,‡ a step originally recommended by the Government of India in 1910, and approved in 1912 by the Foreign Office, Admiralty and India Office, the taking of which had however hitherto been postponed in view of the possibility that it might prejudicially react on the Anglo-Turkish negotiations. But on the recommendations of the Naval authorities it was agreed in 1916 that the proposal should be dropped until the conclusion of the War. It was decided in 1920 that the transfer should not take place.

14. It had been agreed in 1913 that an Indian Post Office should be established at Koweit on the ratification of the Anglo-Turkish Convention; and an office was in fact opened under the orders of the Government of India at the beginning of 1915.

15. Sheikh Mubarak (K.C.I.E. 1911, K.C.S.I. 1914), who had ruled Koweit since his assassination of his brother in 1896, and who had consistently co-operated actively with His Majesty's Government, died on 28th November 1915, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Sheikh Jabir, who was informed in March 1916 by the Viceroy that "so long as you act up to existing arrangements with the British Government you may expect the same support as was enjoyed by your father."

16. In the earlier part of 1915 Koweit had been brought in intimate contact with the affairs of Ibn Saud on the revolt of the Ajman tribe against the latter. The Ajman were finally routed in September, and forced to take refuge in Koweit territory, in which they remained until the death of Mubarak, immediately on which Ibn Saud pressed his successor, Sheikh Jabir, to expel the Ajman Sheikhs, a demand to which Jabir, reluctant to eject the Ajman lest they should be driven into the enemy camp, but unable to hold out against Ibn Saud's pressure without creating an open breach, finally yielded in February 1916.

17. Relations between Ibn Saud and Koweit had for some years before the death of Mubarak been growing cooler. Ibn Saud had latterly resented what he regarded as the equivocal attitude of the Sheikh during the negotiations between the Ottoman Government and himself in the spring of 1914; the asylum given to the Ajman was a further grievance,§ and the incidence of the transit dues levied from time immemorial in Koweit, formed the subject of a complaint by the ruler of Nejd in 1916. But in a

* [illegible]

† [illegible]

‡ [illegible]

§ [illegible]



"ملخص تاريخي للأحداث في أراضي الإمبراطورية العثمانية، فارس وشبه الجزيرة العربية التي تؤثر على الموقف البريطاني في الخليج الفارسي، ١٩٠٧-١٩٢٨" [‎٣٩ظ] (١٨٨/٨٥)

Durbar held at Koweit on 20th November 1916, and attended by Ibn Saud, the Sheikh of Mohammerah, Sheikh Jabir of Koweit and Sir Percy Cox, for the purpose of investing the Sheikh of Koweit with the C.S.I., the three chiefs swore together to work with His Majesty's Government for the achievement of a common end.¶

¶ Tel. from Pol. Res. to G. of I., T. 37, Nov. 21 1916, P. [illegible]/16.

18. On the death on 5th February 1917, of Sheikh Jabir "in whose weak hands" to quote the Political Agent,* Government in Koweit "had almost collapsed," His Majesty's Government approved the recognition as successor of his brother Sheikh Salim, to whom an assurance similar to that granted to his predecessor and quoted above was conveyed by the Viceroy in March 1917. The new Sheikh was a man of very different calibre from Sheikh Jabir. Narrow in outlook, bigoted in religious matters, tactless in his personal relations, his marked individuality and strength of purpose none the less made it possible for the Political Agent to report in the spring of 1918 that he had "established himself in a brief space of time very securely in the Sheikhdom." But the qualities which helped him to assert himself locally shortly set him at odds with both His Majesty's Government and Ibn Saud.

* Report on situation in Koweit, March 1918, P. 2002/18.

P. [illegible]/17.

Report by P.A., P. 2160/18.

19. Difficulty arose with the latter over the Ajman tribe, whom Salim allowed in October 1917 to return to Koweit, and over the respective rights of Ibn Saud and the Sheikh to levy tribute on the Awazim tribe, and formed the subject of vigorous complaint by Ibn Saud at the end of 1917. In July 1918, Mr. Philby represented that Ajman activities based on Koweit territory were causing widespread resentment in Nejd and leading to remonstrance from Ibn Saud as to the inadequacy of our support. Measures to meet this grievance—the location of a mobile column in Koweit territory, the stationing of a British post at Safwan Wells, the occupation of Koweit itself—were under examination when, in September 1918, Lord Allenby's victories in Palestine made the removal of the blockade possible and temporarily eased the situation, and no action was taken beyond warning the leading Sheiks that if raids continued their subsidies would cease.

Tel. from Sir P. Cox to S. of S. for I. 4244, Dec. 29 1917, P. [illegible]/17.

P. 4230/18.

Tel. from C.C., Baghdad, to S. of S. for I. 7866, Sept. 22 1918, P. [illegible]/18.

20. Difficulty with His Majesty's Government arose over the strict maintenance in Koweit territories and ports of the blockade imposed in (?) 1915‖ with a view to preventing the leakage of supplies to the enemy, whether in Mesopotamia or in the isolated Turkish garrisons at Medina and elsewhere in the Arabian peninsula—a blockade, not unnaturally unpopular with Koweit merchants, the strictness of which was relaxed by Salim. The Sheikh subsequently adopted an attitude so obstructive in the matter that, after prolonged consideration, it was found necessary to warn him through the Political Resident, on 5th July 1918, that the assurances conveyed to him on his accession were conditional on his good behaviour, and that, should acts "contrary to the interests of (His Majesty's) Government" "unfortunately be committed in future," he would be held personally responsible.† The hint was not wasted; the Sheikh for the remainder of the war maintained a less unsatisfactory attitude towards His Majesty's Government,‡ and his co-operation in the matter of the blockade was recognised at the end of 1918 by the grant of the C.S.I. and of a lump sum of 3 lakhs of rupees, and by the cancellation of the claim of the Government of India in respect of the loan of £12,500 made in connection with the Koweit water supply in 1914§ (see para. 10 above).

† Tel. from C.C. Baghdad, to S. of S. for I. [illegible], July 8, 1918, P. [illegible]/18.

‡ Cf. tel. from Viceroy to S. of S. for I., Oct. 22 1918, P. [illegible]/18.

§ Tel. from S. of S. for I. to Viceroy, Oct. 22 1918, P. [illegible]/18.

21. On the conclusion of the war His Excellency despatched his nephew, the present Sheikh, to offer his congratulations to the King on its successful outcome, and there has been no friction of importance since then with His Majesty's Government.

P. [illegible]/18.

(2).—1919-28.

22. The termination of the war necessitated a decision as to the status of Koweit, which His Majesty's Government had promised in November 1914 to recognise as an independent principality under British protection. The declaration of a British protectorate over the State, as over Bahrein, &c., which was mooted by the Civil Commissioner, Baghdad, met with no support from the Government of India, who took exception to it

‖ It has not been possible to ascertain the precise date.



as likely to rouse suspicion in the neighbouring Arab peoples, to provoke the jealousy of other Powers, and to involve His Majesty's Government and the Government of India in heavy obligations, both military and financial. Their view was accepted by the Secretary of State for India; the proposal was dropped and matters continued to rest on the declaration of 1914 quoted in para. 12 above. On the general question of status being specifically raised in connection with the preparation of a Koweit Order in Council, the Foreign Office in July 1921 expressed the view that, from the legal standpoint and on the understanding that there was no intention of including Koweit within the boundaries of Mesopotamia, "the status of this territory would appear to be governed by Article 132 of the Treaty of Sèvres." It was subsequently agreed that a final decision on the question of status must await the signature of the Treaty of Peace with Turkey, and, the Treaty of Lausanne having been signed in the autumn of 1923, steps were taken to introduce an Order in Council providing for British jurisdiction within the territory of the Sheikh. That territory, as stated in para. 2 above, may now be regarded as an independent Arab State under British protection, but not a British protectorate.

Letter from F.O. to I.O., July 25 1921, P. 3461.

23. The questions of most importance which have arisen in Koweit since the conclusion of the War are the following:—

A. Internal:—

(1) Koweit Order in Council providing for British jurisdiction within the Principality.
(2) Termination of the lease of Bender Shweikh.

B. External:—

(1) *Relations with Ibn Saud*—
  (a) Koweit-Nejd-Iraq boundary question;
  (b) Koweit-Nejd Customs question;
  (c) The Akhwan menace.
(2) *Relations with Iraq*—
  (a) Exemption from taxation of date gardens in Iraq of the Sheikh of Koweit;
  (b) Position of Koweit *vis-à-vis* Iraq.
(3) *Relations with Persia.*

INTERNAL QUESTIONS, 1919–28.

(a) **The Koweit Order in Council.**

24. The question of extending the scope of the "Persian Coast and Islands Order in Council, 1907," had been under consideration before the War, but no decision had been reached upon it, the difficulty in respect of Koweit having principally been the undesirability of taking action before a settlement should have been arrived at with Turkey in regard to the Arab Littoral. In December 1919 the Civil Commissioner at Baghdad again raised* the question of passing a jurisdictional Order in Council for Koweit. The India Office expressed the opinion, however,† that, although the Order was desirable in itself and though there would be advantage in issuing it at an early date, it was desirable to postpone action until a decision had been taken on the machinery for the administration of the Mesopotamian Mandate and the effect of the Mandate upon the relations of His Majesty's Government with contiguous countries. This view was accepted by the Foreign Office‡ and the matter was allowed to rest for a year.

* Letter from C.C. to G. of I., Dec. 22, 1919, P. 807/20.
† I.O. letter to F.O., June 8 1920, P. 3788/20.
‡ F.O. to I.O., June 14 1920, P. 4080/20.

25. The question was again raised in the summer of 1921 by the High Commissioner in Iraq, who recommended (a view in which the Government of India concurred)§ that the promulgation of an Order in Council need not be further delayed now that Turkey was recognised as having lost suzerainty over the Principality. The matter was referred to the Colonial Office who, under the recommendations of the Masterton-Smith Committee, had become responsible for policy on the Arab Littoral of the Persian Gulf. On reference to the Foreign Office they were informed that, from the legal point of view and on the supposition that there was no intention of including Koweit within the boundaries of Mesopotamia, the status of that territory would seem to be governed by Article 132 of the Treaty of Sèvres under which

§ Tel. from Viceroy to S. of S. for I., 241 S., Feb. 22, 1921, P. 1179/21.



Turkey renounced in favour of the principal Allied Powers all rights and title over territories outside Europe not otherwise disposed of by the Treaty; that, in practice, provided some prior agreement were reached with the Sheikh of Koweit, it would appear unlikely that any Foreign Powers would challenge the issue of an Order in Council on the lines of the Bahrein Order in Council of 1913 (although the extension of British jurisdiction, as in that order, to foreigners might involve the prior concurrence of some Foreign Powers), but that, while the High Commissioner in Iraq might be authorised to open negotiations with the Sheikh with a view to ascertaining the measure of British supervision which His Excellency was prepared to accept, the actual issue of an Order in Council consolidating any agreement that might be reached with the Sheikh should be postponed until the coming into force of the Treaty of Peace with Turkey.

C.O. to F.O., July 9 1921, P. 3078/21.
F.O. to C.O., July 25 1921, P. 3488/21.

26. No further action was taken until the Treaty of Lausanne had been signed and, owing to the necessity for departmental examination of the provisions of the Order, the approval of His Majesty to an Order in Council was not finally obtained until 17th March 1925. Under the Order in question jurisdiction over British subjects and protected persons, the subjects and protected persons of non-Moslem foreign Governments, and Koweit subjects or the subjects of other Moslem Governments registered in the Office of the Political Agent as being regularly employed by British subjects or subjects of non-Moslem foreign Governments, was vested in the Political Agent subject to the general control of, and a right of appeal to, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf. It may be noted* that, no foreign Power having consented to the exercise of jurisdiction over its nationals in Koweit by His Majesty, the Political Agent was instructed, at the request of the Foreign Office, that, in the event of a national of a non-Moslem Power committing some crime or misdemeanour necessitating proceedings against him, or of such a person becoming involved in civil proceedings, the matter should at once be brought to the notice of His Majesty's Government who, on learning that such a case had arisen, would take steps to ascertain from the Government of the person concerned whether they desired that the case should be dealt with under the Koweit Order in Council. The Order in Council came into force in the 1st October 1925,† but the concurrence of the Sheikh in the delegation of jurisdiction over the classes of person in question was not finally obtained until November 1925.‡ Since that date various Rules of Court and King's Regulations have been issued under the Koweit Order in Council, but no point of importance has arisen in connection with its operation.

* Letter from F.O. to I.O., Mar. 3 1926, P. 868.

† G. of I. Notification of 1926, Sept. 23 1925, P. 3464/25.

‡ Letter from G. of I. to I.O., 220 H., Jan. 21 1926, P. 846/26.

27. It may be recorded that, a clearer understanding as to responsibility, as between the interested Departments of His Majesty's Government, for the internal administration of Koweit having been reached by that stage, the preparation and issue of the Order in Council of 1925 were, by agreement with the Colonial Office, left to be dealt with by the India Office in conjunction with the Foreign Office.

Letter from C.O. to I.O., Jan. 30 1925, P. 341/25 and P. 1181/25.

(b) **The Bunder Shweikh Lease.**

28. The question of terminating the lease of Bunder Shweikh, the earlier history of which is given in the Foreign Office Memorandum of 1908, and the engagements entered into in connection with which by His Majesty's Government are shown in the Précis of Treaties appended to the present Memorandum, came up for consideration on the conclusion of the War. After considerable correspondence during 1919–20, the Government of India recommended in April 1920 that the lease should be terminated as the Sheikh had maintained a consistently obstructive attitude towards His Majesty's Government. Uncertainty as to the status of Koweit under the Peace Treaty, and consideration of the political effect on the Sheikh of withdrawal of the subsidy which the rent of Bunder Shweikh in fact constituted, of the possibility of bringing pressure to bear on His Excellency in other ways, and of the question of retaining the site at a reduced rent, &c., prevented a decision before the death of Sheikh Salim in February 1921. His Majesty's Government subsequently decided in consultation with the Government of India to terminate the lease of the Bunder Shweikh lands, while agreeing,

Viceroy to S. of S., tel. 437 S., April 13 1920, P. 2887/20.

Tel. from H.C., Baghdad, to S. of S. for I., 97 S., Dec. 19 1920, P. 3661/20.
Tel. from H.C. to S.S. for I., 88, May 8 1921, P. 2400/21.



"ملخص تاريخي للأحداث في أراضي الإمبراطورية العثمانية، فارس وشبه الجزيرة العربية التي تؤثر على الموقف البريطاني في الخليج الفارسي، ١٩٠٧-١٩٢٨" [‎٤١و] (٨٨/١٨٨)

(41)

as they had no present use for the wireless buildings erected on those lands, to the use of the buildings in question by the Sheikh of Koweit as a quarantine station for the town. The High Commissioner for Iraq reported in August 1922 that this decision had been communicated to and accepted by the Sheikh. There have been no further echoes of this question since that date. It should be noted, however, that while the lease has been terminated, the Agreement does not appear to have been abrogated, and that the reciprocal pledges exchanged on its conclusion in 1907 presumably, therefore, remain binding in so far as they are not affected by other subsequent instruments.

Oil in Koweit.

29. In concluding the review of the more important post-war internal developments in Koweit, reference may conveniently be made to the question of oil. The Sheikh had agreed in 1913 (see para. 10 above) not to grant an oil concession without the approval of His Majesty's Government. Here, as in Bahrein, the question of obtaining a concession was revived by the Anglo-Persian Oil Company in 1921, and His Majesty's Government, who were anxious to facilitate the establishment by the Company of control over the oil resources of the north Arabian coast, agreed to the institution of negotiations, which were conducted through the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf. Lengthy negotiations have, however, so far proved unfruitful. (The general question of oil in the Gulf is dealt with in the Board of Trade Memorandum on page 157.)

EXTERNAL QUESTIONS, 1919-28.

(1) Relations with Ibn Saud.

(a) **Koweit-Nejd-Iraq Boundary Question.**

30. Owing to the non-ratification of the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 29th July 1913, the boundaries of Koweit had, as explained above, been left in suspense on the outbreak of the War. Clause 6 of the Treaty concluded with Ibn Saud on the 26th December 1915, provided that the limits of Koweit territory should thereafter be determined. The question remained in a fluid state until the end of the War.

31. In January 1919, on Sheikh Salim proposing to build a fort at Dauhat Balbul, just north of Jabal Manifa, Ibn Saud took exception, claiming that the site in question lay within his territory. No overt act followed, but relations on this subject became increasingly strained, customs difficulties—the Sheikh having placed an embargo on exports to Ibn Saud's ports*—further aggravating the situation. Matters culminated in the surprise and defeat by Akhwan under Faisal-al-Dawish of the Koweit tribesmen, under Sheikh Dhaij, who had been sent by Sheikh Salim to contest Akhwan occupancy of Jariyah, at Hamdeh, near Jariyah, on the 18th April 1920, from which point the friction between the Sheikh of Koweit and Ibn Saud became acute. The situation was briefly,† that the Sheikh claimed on his southern frontier the boundaries represented by the green line in the map attached to draft Anglo-Turkish Convention, which represented the area administered by his father, Sheikh Mubarak, over the whole of which, however, by August 1920 he had no longer effective control. Ibn Saud, on the other hand, claimed the southern portion of the area in question by virtue of the fact that the tribes ordinarily resident therein had since 1914 or thereabouts, been under his direct control, and not under that of Sheikh Salim or his predecessor, Sheikh Jabir.

32. During the summer of 1920, His Majesty's Government, with a view to determining the dispute, on which they had been approached by both parties‡, authorised Sir Percy Cox, then High Commissioner in Iraq, to discuss the matter with Ibn Saud and the Sheikh of Koweit. Ibn Saud formally claimed§ the whole country up to the walls of Koweit, "as in the time of Colonel Pelly," and maintained that he had no cognisance of the boundaries of Koweit agreed between us and the Turks in 1913, and that such an agreement could not in any case be operative against him, especially as he had himself recovered the El Hasa province from Turkey before the

* Letter from Ibn Saud to Sheikh Salim, June [illegible] 1920, P. [illegible]

† Cf. tel. from C.C., Baghdad, to S. of S. for I., [illegible], Aug. [illegible] 1920. P. [illegible]

‡ Tel. from P.A., Koweit, to H.C., Iraq, [illegible], Aug. [illegible] 1920 (K.), P. [illegible]; tel. from C.C., Baghdad, Aug. [illegible] 1920, to S. of S. for I., [illegible], P. [illegible]

§ Tel. from P.A., Bahrein, to Pol. Res., Bushire, [illegible] Sept. 17 1920, P. [illegible]; tel. from H.C., Iraq, to S. of S. for I., Oct. [illegible] 1920, [illegible], P. [illegible]



War. Sheikh Salim, on the other hand, claimed to take advantage of the frontier agreed upon between Turkey and His Majesty's Government, as embodied in the draft Anglo-Turkish Convention. Sir P. Cox, having heard both sides and formed his own conclusions, recommended that a meeting should be arranged during the winter of 1920 between the principals with a view to settlement. At this stage Sheikh Salim (who, like Ibn Saud, had given an undertaking in writing to refrain from aggression pending the settlement of the issues by the mediation of His Majesty's Government), having failed to demobilise a considerable force which he had gathered together at Jahra, at the head of Koweit Bay, was attacked by the Akhwan and an inconclusive if bloody fight ensued (October 1920).

33. Thanks to the good offices of the High Commissioner, it proved possible to avoid further hostilities, and negotiations continued until the early part of 1921. In December 1920 Ibn Saud, who in November‖ had been invited to visit Basra with a view to reaching a settlement under the auspices of His Majesty's Government, expressed his willingness to accept the *ex parte* decision of the High Commissioner, but stated that he was unable to go to Basra owing partly to ill-health, and partly to internal political difficulties. In January 1921, no settlement having yet been reached, the Sheikh of Mohammerah offered to send his son Sheikh Chasib, accompanied by Sheikh Ahmed el Jabir, nephew and heir presumptive of the Sheikh of Koweit, to Nejd¶ to endeavour to arrange a truce between Ibn Saud and Sheikh Salim. His offer was accepted and the mission left for Bahrein *en route* for Nejd in February, reaching Ibn Saud's camp to the north of Riyadh on the 2nd March. On the 4th March the news of the death of Sheikh Salim arrived, whereupon Ibn Saud stated that there was no longer any quarrel to settle or any need for a frontier between his territories and those of the Sheikh of Koweit*—an arrangement with which Sheikh Ahmed (whose succession was recognised by His Majesty's Government, who renewed to him the assurances given to Sheikh Salim†), was reported at the time to be quite satisfied. (Ibn Saud had already been informed‡ before the death of Sheikh Salim, that His Majesty's Government recognised the territory within the inner boundary (the red circle) shown on the map attached to the Anglo-Turkish Agreement as definitely appertaining to Koweit and not open to dispute).

34. No further developments took place until November 1922, when at the Conference held at Ojair from 27th November to 3rd December between Sir Percy Cox and Ibn Saud (the Political Agent, Koweit, also being present) the Koweit-Nejd frontier came up for consideration. It was recognised at once that the power of the Sheikh of Koweit in the desert was much less than it had been at the time of the conclusion of the Anglo-Turkish Agreement of 1913, and a settlement was finally reached under which the **frontier** as **between Nejd and Koweit** starts from the junction of the Wadi al Aujah with the Batin on the west; running thence (leaving Riqai to Nejd) in a straight line to the junction of the 29th parallel of latitude with the red semicircle on the map attached to the draft Anglo-Turkish agreement, and reproduced in Map II appended to this Memorandum; thence following the red semicircle to the sea south of Ras al Qulaiah. The southern boundary of the recognised territory of Koweit was defined as above. It was simultaneously agreed that the tract of country bounded on the north by the above line, on the west by the Shaqq, on the east by the sea, and on the south by a straight line running eastward from the Shaqq in the west through Ain al Abd to the sea north of Ras al Mishab, should be recognised as common to the two States of Nejd and Koweit, who were to enjoy equal rights in it until such time as a fresh agreement should be arrived at between them regarding it through the good offices of His Majesty's Government. This frontier, which had been negotiated on behalf of the Sheikh (Major More, the Political Agent at Koweit, representing his interests), was accepted by His Excellency on the 26th January 1923.

35. In April 1923 the Sheikh was informed that His Majesty's Government recognised the **frontier** claimed by him as **between Koweit and Iraq** and the attribution to Koweit of the Islands of Warba, Bubiyan, Maskan, Failakah,



Anhab, Kubbar, Qaru, and Umm-el-Maradim—in other words, the frontier indicated by the green line of the Anglo-Turkish Agreement of 29th July 1913. The frontiers of Koweit are accordingly as shown on Map II attached to the present Memorandum. Since 1923 no difficulty has arisen in regard to them.

(b) **Customs dispute between Ibn Saud and the Sheikh of Koweit.**

36. The difficulty is not a new one; it dates from before the war. With the acquisition of El Hasa by Ibn Saud in 1913, Nejd acquired a sea front, but the sea front in question contained no port of any real value, and the efforts made from time to time by Ibn Saud, with the assistance at intervals of His Majesty's Government, to secure that steamship lines such as the British Indian Steam Navigation Company should call at Ojair or at Qatif, or to develop Ojair, Qatif or Jubail, have proved abortive. In these circumstances a friendly understanding with the Sheikhs of Bahrein and Koweit on the question of customs and transit dues is of great and evident importance to the Ruler of Nejd. Agreement with Bahrein, on the basis of a transit duty of 2 per cent., was reached in 1920, after long discussion and much ill-feeling, with the assistance of the Government of India. Agreement with Koweit, which in 1923 levied a 4 per cent. duty on imports and a further 4 per cent. transit duty, has not yet been reached; and since 1920 Ibn Saud has in consequence maintained an embargo on trade with Koweit with the result that the prosperity of the Principality, as indeed of Qasim and Hail in Nejd, has been seriously affected.

P. 1274/24.

P. [illegible]/25.

37. The position is briefly that Ibn Saud, on the ground that it is impossible to collect import duty on the desert frontier between Kuwait and Nejd, is anxious for the establishment either of a Nejdi Custom House in Koweit town, or of an arrangement under which export duty only should be collected on his behalf at Koweit, a fixed sum being paid to Nejd instead of import duty. A third proposal,* made in 1923 by the Sheikh's cousin Abdullah-as-Salim, was that the embargo should be raised on terms which would have involved the payment to Ibn Saud, through an Agent and Collector stationed in Koweit (Abdullah-as-Salim himself), of the whole of the customs dues on goods exported from Koweit by land other than those destined for the Sheikh's own subjects or for Iraq.†

* Cp. Major More's [illegible] s.v. Abdullah-as-Salim.

† June-July 1923. P. [illegible]/23.

38. The objection of the Sheikh of Koweit to an agreement on the lines referred to above would appear to be due as much to the fear of allowing Ibn Saud to establish a stranglehold over Koweit as to anxiety to secure an arrangement which shall not be economically unsatisfactory from his own point of view. An arrangement which would enable Ibn Saud to collect his own dues in Koweit would, as the Government of India pointed out in December 1923, appear *primâ facie* to contravene both Ibn Saud's engagements to His Majesty's Government, and those into which His Majesty's Government have themselves entered with Koweit; while the extension in Koweit of the influence of the King of the Hejaz and Nejd would in any event be objectionable—the engagements to Koweit of His Majesty's Government apart—on general political grounds.

39. There has been no development of importance in recent years, though the position cannot be satisfactory from the point of view of either Koweit or Nejd. A settlement which would be fair to both parties and unobjectionable from the standpoint of His Majesty's Government could best be reached on the lines suggested in July 1923 by the then Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, which were accepted at the time by the Colonial Office and the India Office. Colonel Knox's recommendation was that steps should be taken to obtain the agreement of Ibn Saud and the Sheikh of Koweit, firstly to the appointment of a Customs expert, preferably from India, to advise on the reform of the Koweit Customs, and on the shares of the Customs revenue to be apportioned to Nejd and Koweit respectively, and, secondly, to the appointment for five years of an official to serve under the control of the Political Agent and carry out the recommendations made by the Adviser. But in February 1924 the Political Resident reported that, proposals on these lines having been put to the interested parties, "neither Ibn Saud nor

C.O. letter to I.O., [illegible]/23, Aug. [illegible] 1923, P. [illegible]/23.



"ملخص تاريخي للأحداث في أراضي الإمبراطورية العثمانية، فارس وشبه الجزيرة العربية التي تؤثر على الموقف البريطاني في الخليج الفارسي، ١٩٠٧-١٩٢٨" [٤٢ظ] (١٨٨/٩١)

P. 1104/26.
P. 1270/26.

Sheikh Ahmed evinced the least desire to have the dispute settled;" neither party raised the question at the Koweit conference in the same year; and though in October 1926 the Sheikh of Koweit was stated by the Political Agent, Koweit, to be thinking of paying Ibn Saud a visit, the real object of which would be to induce him to remove the trade prohibitions, and though in February 1928 the Political Resident reported that the effect of the embargo was to create stagnation in Koweit trade, the commercial prosperity of Koweit depending on Nejd, there has been no development in the matter since that date.

Tel. from Pol. Res. to C.O., [illegible], Feb. [illegible] 1928, P. [illegible].

(e) **The Akhwan Menace.**

40. Akhwan raids on Koweit had taken place in 1924 and 1925,‡ but on an inconsiderable scale. The Akhwan raids on Iraq by Feisal-al-Dawish and the Mutair tribe at the end of 1927 had, however, more important reactions on the Principality.§ At the request of the Sheikh His Majesty's Government agreed to aerial reconnaissance over his territory; and, with his concurrence, it was later decided to withdraw the restrictions originally imposed by His Majesty's Government on bombing in pursuit of raiders within Koweit territory. An Akhwan raid was successfully dealt with by Koweit forces at El Riqai on 27th January 1928,‖ and whilst retiring into Nejd was pursued and successfully attacked by the Royal Air Force on two following days. A further raid occurred late in February, which was not opposed by ground forces, but was again successfully pursued by the Royal Air Force for two days. In view of the possibility of further serious developments, and of the recognised liability of His Majesty's Government under existing engagements for the "protection of Koweit" (a phrase the exact scope of which is open to argument¶), further defence measures were now taken. A temporary air base (political objections to a permanent station being regarded as conclusive, *cp.* para. 47 below), was established in Koweit: a flight of aeroplanes and a detachment of armoured cars were despatched to the town for its protection: three vessels of the Persian Gulf squadron (later reduced to one) were stationed off Koweit itself, and a landing party disembarked and remained on shore until the crisis had passed. All action taken was taken with the concurrence of the Sheikh, who was, in addition, allowed to purchase from the Government of India a small supply of machine guns and Lewis guns. After some discussion His Majesty's Government and the Government of India agreed that His Excellency might be allowed to purchase armoured motor cars, on the understanding that they would be used only for defence, and would not cross the borders of Koweit in repelling raids save with the concurrence of the Political Agent. The crisis, however, passed off without incident, and the special forces which had been despatched to Koweit were withdrawn during the late spring. For financial reasons the Sheikh abandoned the idea of purchasing armoured cars.**

‡ P. [illegible]/24, P. [illegible]/25, P. [illegible]/25.

§ P. [illegible]/27.

‖ P. [illegible]/28.

¶ P. [illegible]/28.

** Tel. from Pol. Res. to C.O. Aug. [illegible] 1928, P. [illegible].

41. Consequent on the breakdown of the negotiations with Ibn Saud in the summer of 1928, and the possible danger of a revival of Akhwan activity on the Iraq-Nejd border, the question of granting discretion to the Air Officer Commanding, Iraq, to carry out reconnaissances by air or car over Koweit territory was raised by the Air Ministry.

42. The "very obvious and grave political objection" to air reconnaissance over Koweit was emphasised by Sir Gilbert Clayton. After considerable discussion between the Departments concerned, the Air Officer Commanding was finally authorised to carry out occasional reconnaissances both by air and car, at his discretion, on the understanding that the concurrence of the Sheikh should be obtained, through the Political Resident; that reconnaissance should be carried out as infrequently and in as unprovocative a manner as possible; that the Sheikh should be given "no grounds for supposing that the Royal Air Force have assumed responsibility for the defence of Koweit or that he himself has been relieved of his obligations in this respect"; that save in case of real emergency reconnaissance should not be carried out within 25 miles of the Nejd-Koweit frontier or of the Nejd-Iraq frontier in the neighbourhood



(43)

of the neutral zone; and that the authority given should operate only for the period of the present emergency. The question of the establishment of an advance air base in the event of a raid was reserved for further consideration if and when the need arose.

(2) Relations with Iraq.

(1) Question of exemption from taxation of date gardens in Iraq of the Sheikh of Koweit.

43. As will be seen from para. 12 above, one of the guarantees given on 3rd November 1914 to the Sheikh of Koweit was that his "date gardens on the Turkish side of the Shatt-el-Arab should remain in full possession of you and your heirs and immune from taxation."

44. At the time when the Financial Agreement, arising out of Article 15 of the Anglo-Iraq Treaty of 10th October 1922, was under the consideration of His Majesty's Government, it was proposed that a provision to safeguard the right of the Sheikh under the guarantee referred to above should be inserted. This proposal was subsequently abandoned, and the High Commissioner was instructed in November 1923 to treat this obligation separately under Article 10 of the Anglo-Iraq Treaty. Owing to an oversight, the point was omitted when the exchange of Notes defining the obligations of Iraq and His Majesty's Government under Article 10 of the Treaty took place; and on the matter coming to notice some other method of safeguarding the rights of the Sheikh under the guarantee in question had to be devised. The Iraq Government, on being approached, expressed the opinion that the immunity in question could not properly be continued in the circumstances without the authority of a special law, and that, if special legislation were introduced, it would be rejected by the Iraq Parliament. They stated that they were, in the circumstances, unwilling to take the responsibility of introducing such legislation, and desired that the matter should be referred to His Majesty's Government.

See P. 4037/27.

C.O. letter to I.O., 4037/27, Sept. 21 1927, P. 4037/27.

45. The Foreign Office, Colonial Office and India Office agreed that there was no ground on which His Majesty's Government could justify the discontinuance of the immunity from taxation hitherto accorded to the Sheikh of Koweit, as to the Sheikh of Mohammerah. After considerable discussion it was, however, decided that it was undesirable to give prominence to the question by the insertion in the revised Financial Agreement of a provision to cover it if any other method of safeguarding the position be found; and that this might be regarded as having been attained if the Iraq Government accepted the reference in the Memorandum accompanying Article 3 of the revised Treaty between His Majesty's Government and Iraq (which provided for the recognition by the Iraq Government of British international obligations in respect of Iraq) to the immunity from taxation of the date gardens of the Sheikhs of Koweit and Mohammerah as one of the international obligations in question. No objection having been raised to the inclusion of the undertaking in question by the Iraq delegates, His Majesty's Government in January 1928 placed on record their assumption that the Iraq Government were now prepared to recognise those undertakings as part of the international obligations which His Britannic Majesty had undertaken to see carried out in respect of Iraq, and to recognise that they had inherited the duty of ensuring that those undertakings were fully discharged. The High Commissioner was instructed to inform the Iraq Government accordingly, and to endeavour to induce them to agree to continue to afford to the two Sheikhs in question immunity from taxation in respect of their date gardens in Iraq. His Majesty's Government added that, should the Iraq Government, while prepared to honour those undertakings, feel doubtful of their ability to persuade the Iraq Parliament to pass the necessary legislation, it would be for consideration whether King Feisal should not be requested to pass an Ordinance in accordance with Article 26 (3) of the Iraq Constitution to give effect to them, His Majesty's Government, taking the view that their fulfilment might be regarded as a treaty obligation on the part of Iraq which the Government of that country might be called upon to fulfil under Article 4 of the Treaty of 10th October

P. 5147/27.

D.O. letter from C.O. to I.O. and F.O., 4037/27, Dec. 8 1927.

Para. 4 of C.O. Desp. to Baghdad, Jan. 28 1928, P. 511/28.



1922, or under Article 3 of the new Treaty, when that instrument entered into force, but regarding it as clearly preferable that the Iraq Government should, if possible, be induced to honour those undertakings without the necessity of evoking the Articles of the Treaty to which reference had been made. No information is available as to any subsequent developments.

(2) Position of Koweit *vis-à-vis* **Iraq.**

46. Under the engagement of 1914 between His Majesty's Government and the Sheikh of Koweit, the Principality of Koweit is recognised as an independent Principality and as entitled to the protection of His Majesty's Government, by whom, as stated in para. 35 above, the present Koweit-Iraq boundary was recognised in 1923. Formally, therefore, there is no question of its absorption by Iraq. The Political Resident in the Persian Gulf has, however, recently drawn attention (as the result of an incident in which an Iraq officer was alleged to have despatched an Iraq police inspector to Koweit to arrest and bring back an offender from there) to the danger of Koweit and Iraq becoming, in the minds of the native community, unified under British protection. Sir Lionel Haworth remarked* that "it must be an essential part of our policy that Koweit should be kept apart from Iraq—it is inevitable that it should be the tendency of Iraq gradually to assimilate Koweit even if there is no conscious knowledge of the fact among the officials of the Iraq Government. Such tendencies result, not from direct action, but from psychological factors, from the dependence of the Sheikh of Koweit upon Iraq for assistance, from the appointment of Iraq officers to Koweit during the raids, and from the common interests of people, alike in race and religion, depending upon the same market centres and in constant daily communication. It is, indeed, perhaps the natural development that Koweit should draw close to Iraq while we are there, but we do not desire her to get so close that, with the development of time, she would be left there when we leave in spite of our wishes . . . . It is for us to see . . . . that such help as Koweit may require may be obtained from assistance from our Navy and the training of her people—and it would be better that such training should be given from India and not from Iraq. Koweit should be trained to look to His Majesty's Government and India alone and not to a country under our Mandate."

* Desp. to C.O. 14, April 1928 P. 2696/28.

47. The Political Resident had earlier in 1928 urged the undesirability from the point of view alike of the immediate situation and of our future policy of linking Iraq and Koweit in the mind of Ibn Saud by establishing an air base against Akhwan raiders in Koweit territory. He reiterated his objections in connection with the proposals dealt with in paras. 40 and 41 above. On both occasions the Government of India expressed their general agreement in the view taken by him.

Tel. from Pol. Res. to C.O., 17, Feb. 13, 1928, P. 737; tel. from Viceroy to S. of S., No. 4.

Tel. from Viceroy to S. of S. for I., Aug. 21 1928, P. 4627.

(3) Relations with Persia.

48. No question affecting the relations between Koweit and Persia appears to have arisen in the period now under consideration, and it would be unnecessary to refer to the relationship between the two countries were it not for the information which has recently been received that a Persian instruction has been issued to the local Persian officials in the Gulf that the Persian Government can recognise no Arab rulers on the Arab coast of the Gulf, and that all persons belonging to and arriving from Koweit (as from Muscat, Bahrein and the Trucial Sheikhdoms) are to be considered Persian subjects, and Persian passports to be issued to them.

49. It is impossible at the present stage to estimate the importance to be attached to the information quoted above. It may, however, be placed on record that no evidence has been traced of effective exercise in the past of Persian authority in Koweit. The two incidents on which a Persian claim might possibly be based are—first, that Koweit was regarded in 1775 as a dependency of Basra, and that a claim might therefore be put forward in view of the fact that Persia had occupied that town from 1775 to 1779, even though Persian authority does not appear in the same period to have extended to Koweit. The second and more important incident is that of 1809. In

Lor. I, 146, 1402.

Lor. I, 1025.



(44)

October of that year it was ascertained that the Sheikh of Koweit had undoubtedly applied through the Sheikh of Mohammerah to be taken under Persian protection. Mr. Lorimer suggests that this move, which the Sheikh, it is stated, took no pains to conceal, was perhaps contrived by His Excellency merely with a view to testing the degree of interest taken in Koweit by His Majesty's Government. The Sheikh's advances were, however, in any case rejected by the Shah.

C.—Summary.

50. In conclusion, it may be remarked that, while the present Sheikh is far from an outstanding personality, internal conditions in Koweit at the present time show a marked improvement on the position on the death of Sheikh Salim in 1921. In August 1920† local feeling was reported to be running high against Sheikh Salim, owing to the loss of trade resulting from his quarrel with Ibn Saud, to his general incapacity as a ruler and to his total lack of tact, and it would appear that a *coup d'état* was more than a possibility‡ had not the Sheikh died at a critical period of the Koweit-Nejd boundary negotiations on 23rd February 1921. Under the present Sheikh, while the customs dispute with Nejd remains an open sore and the activity of the Akhwan a standing menace, matters may on the whole, be said quite definitely to have improved. The boundary question has been settled and on a basis not unsatisfactory from the point of view of Koweit; the question of British jurisdiction within the Principality has equally been regularised; internal conditions are not such as to call for serious animadversion and, while the Sheikh, as stated above, is not an outstanding personality, he is not only well disposed towards His Majesty's Government but, from the point of view of internal administration, may be regarded as a not inefficient ruler when judged by Arab standards.

† Tel. from C.C. to S. of S. for I., [illegible], Aug. 29 1920, P. [illegible]/20.

‡ Cp. tel. from H.C., Baghdad, to S. of S. for I., Jan. 29 1921, P. [illegible]/21. Major More's Report; Article on [illegible] Abdulaziz-as-Saghir.

Major More's Report, passim.

51. On a broad view, the importance of Koweit is less great from the standpoint of His Majesty's Government than that of Bahrein or of Muscat; but its absorption, or the establishment in it of a dominating influence, by Ibn Saud, could not but react injuriously on the position of His Majesty's Government alike in Iraq and in Bahrein and along the Trucial Coast. Hitherto it has been possible to maintain British influence without substantial interference in the internal affairs of the Principality; the recent activities of the Akhwan have led to formal appeals by the Sheikh to the guarantees of protection which he holds from His Majesty's Government, and it is to be hoped that the standing threat to his independence constituted by his powerful neighbour in Nejd and the effective assistance given him against the Akhwan during the present year may help to continue to keep him generally amenable to British influence. The desirability, at the same time, of securing that the Sheikh shall not escape absorption by Ibn Saud only to end by absorption in an Iraq, no longer under British mandate, and the increased importance which his Principality, situated at the head of the Gulf, will assume as British control decreases in Iraq, cannot be overlooked in considering the general policy to be adopted in the Principality by His Majesty's Government.

D.—Points referred to Persian Gulf Sub-Committee.

52. The points in connection with Koweit which have been specifically mentioned in connection with the deliberations of the Persian Gulf Sub-Committee are:—

(*a*) Whether the maintenance of the independence of Koweit (as of Muscat and the Trucial Chiefs) which is constantly threatened by Ibn Saud, is necessary for British purposes, and, if so, how is it to be secured? (P.G. 3 viii, P.G. 6 (2) c. i.)

(*b*) The position as between Iraq and Koweit—desirability of keeping Koweit clear from absorption in Iraq, or from coming under Iraq influence. (P.G. 6, 2 (*b*) (3).)

(*c*) Extent to which His Majesty's Government should increase or decrease the interest taken and the control exercised by them in Koweit. (P.G. 6, 2 (*c*) 5.)



E.—Views of Government of India.

Tel. from Viceroy to S. of S. for I., 1426 S., July 23 1928, P.G. 9

53. In this connection the Government of India have expressed the view that the maintenance of the independence of Koweit (as of Muscat, Bahrein, and the Trucial Chiefs) is necessary in British interests; that the veiled protectorate at present exercised over them by His Majesty's Government suffices against European encroachments; that so long as we do not alienate Arab opinion by attempting undue westernisation it suffices also against encroachments by Wahabi State, and that if need be, it can be more explicitly asserted.



"ملخص تاريخي للأحداث في أراضي الإمبراطورية العثمانية، فارس وشبه الجزيرة العربية التي تؤثر على الموقف البريطاني في الخليج الفارسي، ١٩٠٧-١٩٢٨" [‎٤٥و] (١٨٨/٩٦)

(45)

THE TRUCIAL CHIEFS, 1908-28.

(Communicated by India Office and revised to 4th October 1928.)

I.—Introductory.

1. It is not proposed in this memorandum to enter in any detail into the internal history of the Trucial States, but rather to deal in a general way with the developments which have taken place in the last 20 years, and the problems presented by the States as matters stand to-day.

2. The Trucial Chiefs—so-called on account of the treaties of maritime truce concluded by them between 1820 and 1853 with His Majesty's Government, under which a check was imposed on their internecine strife and their piratical and slaving activities in the Gulf—are the Sheikhs of Ras-al-Khaima, Umm-al-Quiwain, Ajman, Shargah, Debai, Abu Dhabi and El Katr. The last-named Principality, the history of which between 1908 and 1916 is separately dealt with in the Note on p. 95, was added to the number of the Trucial States consequent on the conclusion* on 3rd November 1916 of a treaty between the Sheikh and His Majesty's Government, under which His Majesty's Government recognised the independence of El Katr and, in return for certain undertakings, extended to it the benefit of the guarantees contained in the Trucial Treaties. The territory ruled over by the Trucial Sheikhs at the present day lies on the Arab littoral of the Persian Gulf, between the west side of the Promontory of El Katr (or Qatar) and approximately the north point of the Musandim Promontory in Oman (compare Map II appended to this Memorandum).

* P. 288/17.

3. The Trucial States remain independently administered tribal principalities, governed by independent Arab Sheikhs. The Trucial Treaties (the substance of which is given in the précis of treaty engagements printed as an Appendix to this Memorandum) accord to the contracting parties the right to accredit a representative on the one side at the headquarters of the several Chiefs, and on the other at the British Residency at Bushire; but in practice the Chiefs have no representatives, and His Majesty's Government are represented only by a native agent of the Residency at Bushire, who is stationed at Shargah, on the Trucial Coast, and moves from place to place as required.

4. Responsibility for the political control of the States rested up to the end of the war with the Government of India. The Masterton-Smith Committee made no specific reference to them, but, on the general principle underlying the recommendations of that Committee, the affairs of the States would appear to continue to be primarily the concern of the Government of India, subject to the ultimate control of His Majesty's Government, save when they involve or touch on major questions of policy involving relations with Ibn Saud, or affecting the Arabian policy of His Majesty's Government. In that case they fall to be dealt with directly by His Majesty's Government through the Colonial Office.

5. Save in respect of the Residency Agent at Shargah, there appears to be no political expenditure in connection with the Sheikhs. No subsidies are or have been paid to any of their number, although the grant of a subsidy to the Sheikh of El Katr was considered and ultimately rejected in connection with the negotiation of the treaty concluded with him on the 3rd November 1916.†

† Tel. from S. of S. for I. to Viceroy, Sept. 8 1916. P. 3298/16.

II.—Internal History, 1908-28.

6. The internal history of the Trucial States in the last 20 years is of no general interest or importance, and it is unnecessary to recapitulate it here. The incident of most importance in the pre-war period was an undertaking by the Sheikhs not to give pearling or sponge fishing concessions,‡ save with the prior approval of His Majesty's Government. During the war the Sheikhs adopted a friendly attitude; and, broadly speaking, they have satisfactorily implemented their engagements to His Majesty's Government in matters such as the arms traffic and the slave trade. His Majesty's Government have consistently avoided entanglement in their internal affairs,

‡ P. 2062/11. P. 1908/12.



and have confined themselves to recognising successions (too frequently secured by assassination), subject to formal acceptance by the Sheikh affected of the treaty obligations undertaken by his predecessor.

Oil.

7. In view of the importance of the oil question it should be placed on record that the Trucial Sheikhs of Shargah, Ras-al-Khaima, Dabai, Abu Dhabi, Ajman and Umm-al-Qaiwain agreed in 1922 not to grant a concession in the event of oil being found in their territories, save with the permission of His Majesty's Government. No question of a concession has so far arisen. Considerable discussion has, however, taken place between the Sheikh of El Katr (who is precluded by Article 5 of his Treaty of 3rd December 1916 from granting any concession without the approval of His Majesty's Government), and various oil interests affected in regard to the grant of a concession in his territory; and an option for 18 months in which to negotiate for an oil concession was granted by him to the Anglo-Persian Oil Company in March 1926. The negotiations have throughout been conducted under the close supervision and with the approval of His Majesty's Government.

III.—External Developments affecting the Trucial Sheikhs, 1908-28.

8. The developments in relation to the Sheikhs of most importance during the period now in question have been external. They are—

(a) The rise of Ibn Saud.

(b) The recent reassertion of Persian authority in the Persian Gulf.

Ibn Saud and the Trucial Sheikhs.

9. As will be seen from the Foreign Office Memorandum of 1908, the Wahabi connection with the Trucial Coast is of long standing, although for many years prior to 1913 it had ceased to be of any political importance. But the conquest of Hasa by Ibn Saud in 1913 again brought the Wahabi movement directly in touch with the Trucial Sheikhs.* To their territory, as to El Katr, Ibn Saud maintained a hereditary claim. He was, however, warned by the Political Resident of the special treaty relations between His Majesty's Government and the Trucial Sheikhs,† and he maintained an entirely correct attitude towards them during the following years. By the Treaty of 26th December 1915, Ibn Saud undertook to abstain from aggression on or interference with the Trucial Sheikhdoms, or with El Katr,‡ and that instrument formally governed his relations with the States until the conclusion of the Treaty of Jeddah in the spring of 1927.

10. No incident of importance appears to have arisen as between Ibn Saud and the Trucial States until after the European War. In 1921§ the Sheikh of El Katr represented that he was alarmed at the prospect of some of his townspeople becoming Akhwan and joining Ibn Saud, and asked whether Government would help him should he be attacked from the interior. He was informed in reply that Government were not prepared to promise more than diplomatic assistance should he be attacked by Ibn Saud. At the end of 1922 the Sheikh again represented‖ that, while he did not fear an open attack by Ibn Saud so long as the latter remained on good terms with His Majesty's Government, he was seriously alarmed by the more subtle methods employed, he alleged, by the Nejd authorities to make his position impossible. The Political Resident commented that he did not see any practicable means to prevent peaceful penetration of the country by the Akhwan and Ibn Saud's adherents. He suggested that a hint might be given to Ibn Saud to keep his people in order. No action was taken on this proposal, Sir Percy Cox, then High Commissioner in Iraq, reporting¶ that, on finding that Ibn Saud was apparently including the Katr Peninsula within the tract of country for which he was prepared to negotiate an oil concession, he had already very recently "taken him to task, reminding him that he had nothing to do with Katr, except to respect it, under the terms of his treaty with us, and insisting on the limitation of his discussions to the country west of the longitude of Salwah Bay. His Highness accepted this injunction without argument." The Sheikh has maintained his independence,



though it transpired in the air reconnaissance of the Gulf in 1927 that he attaches great importance to avoiding action which might be unpalatable to the Wahabi King.

11. The activity of the Wahabis again came prominently to notice in 1926. The Political Resident then reported** that of the Trucial Chiefs, the Sheikhs of Abu Dhabi and Dubai, together with a number of the tribes under their suzerainty or adjoining their territory, were whole-heartedly opposed to Ibn Saud; that the Sheikhs of Shargah and Ras-al-Khaima were definitely supporters of the Wahabi King; and that the Sheikhs of Ajman and Umm al Qaiwain were inclined to be neutral. In a number of instances the Wahabi Governor of Hasa, Ibn Jiluwi, appeared to have acted in an extremely high-handed manner in the Trucial Sheikhdoms, and the Political Resident was inclined to the view that he aimed at the absorption in Nejd of all Trucial Oman and "Independent" Oman (Jau), and at the establishment of contact with a large district of the Oman Saltanate which was opposed to the Imam and almost independent of the Sultan.

12. An element of doubt existed as to the extent to which Ibn Saud was personally responsible for, or even cognisant of, the activities of the Governor of Hasa; it was decided, after considerable discussion, that no action should be taken in the matter pending the conclusion of the new treaty then in negotiation with him;†† and the assurances secured in that treaty from the King were ultimately held to dispose of the matter.

13. The Government of India were strongly in favour of the inclusion in the treaty in question of an undertaking as regards the Trucial Chiefs substantially identical with that embodied in the Treaty of 26th December 1915 (see para. 9 above). It proved impossible to secure Ibn Saud's agreement to this;‡‡ His Majesty's Government regarded the point as one which it was undesirable to press too far, and in the result the King of the Hejaz and Nejd, in the treaty signed at Jeddah on 20th May 1927, undertook merely "to maintain friendly and peaceful relations with . . . . the Sheikhs of Katr and the Oman coast who are in special treaty relations with His Majesty's Government."

14. The result of the reconnaissance undertaken in connection with the air route in the Persian Gulf along the north Arabian shore in the spring of 1927 was to show that the influence of Ibn Saud had increased in a very marked manner along the north Arabian littoral, and considerable difficulties were placed in the way of the reconnaissance on the ground, either expressed or implied, that political difficulties would be caused with the Wahabis and the Wahabi King by the landing of aeroplanes, &c. (cp. Note on Air Communications in the Gulf on p. 133). So impressed was the Political Resident by the rise of the Wahabi power and by the insecurity to which a chain of air stations along the Arab coast might be exposed by internal dissensions and the danger of Wahabi interference in the petty Sheikhdoms of the Trucial Coast, that in the spring of 1927 he suggested* that the long-established policy of abstention by His Majesty's Government from all but naval commitments should now be discarded and replaced by a definite assumption of responsibility in the States concerned for the orderly succession of Sheikh to Sheikh, for his maintenance in power, and for the protection of his territories by land as well as by sea.

15. The Government of India gave careful and sympathetic consideration to the Resident's proposals. But the conclusion at which they finally arrived† was that, even though the guarantees of non-interference given by Ibn Saud in the Treaty of Jeddah of 1927 fell considerably short of those which he had been prepared to accept in 1915, they conveyed to the King of the Hejaz a clear intimation, solemnly accepted by him, of the special position and of the interest in the Trucial Sheikhdoms of His Majesty's Government. Past history, in the view of the Government of India, justified them in relying for security against the danger of Wahabi encroachments on the treaty engagements into which Ibn Saud had entered with His Majesty's Government, and, while it was impossible to forecast the effect on Gulf politics of the death of Ibn Saud, they were not prepared, in these circumstances, to make an immediate reversal of their policy in the Persian Gulf

‡‡ Mr. Jordan to Sir A. Chamberlain, Jan. 28 1927, para. 11.



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in anticipation of a state of affairs which might never arise. Should a more definite assertion be called for by subsequent developments, that assertion "could be made and enforced on the basis of our existing political position and sea power." As to the air route, they regarded its establishment along the Arab littoral, should a decision to this end be reached, as both possible and advisable without any alteration in "our old and well-tried Gulf policy." They added that the mere presence of an aerodrome would, to some extent, afford a visible guarantee of British protection, but indicated that some subsidy to the Sheikhs in whose territories the aerodromes would lie or over whose territories the air route would pass would probably be necessary.

The reassertion of Persian Authority in the Persian Gulf.

16. It is only in the last two years that Persia has commenced to adopt an active policy in the Gulf. The result of the adoption of that policy has been to bring her into conflict on certain points with the Trucial Chiefs and their interests. The Trucial settlements on the south Persian coast, the occupation of Henjam for so many years by Trucial Arabs, the Trucial ownership of the islands of Tamb, Little Tamb, Abu Musa and Sirri, the title to which of the Sheikhs of Shargah and Ras-al-Khaima is contested by Persia, have all afforded grounds of friction.

17. The three most important incidents which have arisen are the expulsion by Persia of the Sheikh of Henjam in May 1928, the arrest in July 1928 of a Trucial dhow plying between Dabai and Khassab, which raised the question of the status of Tamb, and—a direct consequence of the last-named incident—the questioning by Persia of the independence of the Trucial owners of Tamb.

18. The history of the **expulsion of the Sheikh of Henjam** is given in paras. 28 to 34 of the Memorandum on Henjam on page 113. The incident was one the disposal of which would, in all probability, have presented relatively little difficulty, had it been possible to localise it. But the Sheikh of Henjam is the father-in-law of the Trucial Sheikh of Dabai; and he and his people are by race Jowasimi Arabs, who claim never to have accepted Persian nationality, and who maintain very close relations with their fellow tribesmen on the north Arabian shore.* As a result, disturbances in Henjam react immediately on feeling on the Trucial Coast, and in the present instance the effect of the expulsion of the Sheikh was, according to the Senior Naval Officer, so greatly to excite the Trucial Arabs that they had stated that were it not for "the British action and our gunboats, they would come in thousands, seize Kishm Island and Henjam, and kill every Persian on the islands."† Representations in the strongest terms were made to the Residency Agent and the Political Resident, and Sir Lionel Haworth reported that he had been informed by the brother of the Sheikh of Dabai, whom he describes as one of the most level-headed and sensible chiefs on the Trucial Coast, that "if we did nothing to help them, they were prepared to tear up our treaties, much as they liked them, have done with our air route and kill all Persian officials they could and massacre all Persians on the Arab coast."

* Pol. Res. to G. of I., July [illegible] 1928, P. [illegible].

† Tel. from Pol. Res. to G. of I., June [illegible] 1928, P. [illegible].

19. As will be seen from the Memorandum on Henjam, it was agreed, in the early stages of this incident, that the intervention of His Majesty's Government at Tehran on behalf of the Sheikh would do more harm than good.‡ The strength of feeling aroused on the Arab littoral, and the danger—emphasised by the Political Resident—that the Trucial Arabs might have recourse to Ibn Saud should His Majesty's Government, while failing themselves to intervene effectively on behalf of the Sheikh, refuse to allow the Sheikh of Dabai to approach the Persian Government regarding him, have since, however, led the Government of India to modify their view. Attention has also been drawn by the Colonial Office to the difficulties which would arise were the Trucial Arabs to become supporters of Ibn Saud, and while for the moment the return of the Sheikh to Henjam at the invitation of the Persian Government gives hope that a satisfactory solution of the incident may be found, reconsideration of the decision of His Majesty's Government not to intervene with Persia may be called for should this

‡ I.O. to F.O., June [illegible] 1928, P. [illegible].

Tel. from Viceroy, [illegible] S., Sept. [illegible] 1928, P. [illegible].

C.O. to I.O., Sept. [illegible] 1928, P. [illegible].



unfortunately prove not to be the case (*cp.* para. 39 of Memorandum on Henjam on page 115). The incident, and its reactions on the Trucial Coast, on which, as the Government of India remarked, "anti-Persian feeling is always a matter of concern to us, and any anti-Persian ebullition might lead to serious embarrassment,"* illustrate, in any event, the difficulty of the situation to which action, however justified, by Persia may give rise, where the Trucial Arabs are concerned.

* Tel. from Viceroy, 1290 S., June 14 1928, P. 3541.

20. **The Tamb incident** is dealt with in paras. 33 and 34 of the Memorandum on the Status of Tamb, &c., on p. 103. It will be seen that it was with great difficulty that the Sheikhs affected by the Persian arrest of the dhow in question were restrained from undertaking reprisals against Persia; that the Persian claim to the islands of Tamb and Abu Musa, which have been recognised by His Majesty's Government as Trucial territories, remains to be disposed of, and that the question of compensation to the Sheikhs and to the owner of the dhow and his passengers is still unsettled.

Persia and the independence of the Trucial Chiefs.

21. The newspaper *Habl-ul-Matin*, which is understood to derive inspiration from the highest quarters, so long ago as November 1927 included in a list of Persian desiderata the "renewal of the Protectorate of Persia over Muscat and other small Sheikhs of the coast of Oman." The first official indication of a Persian claim of this nature arose, however, in connection with the Tamb incident in August 1928, when the Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs formally stated in a Note that "the Persian Government cannot recognise as independent and owner of the said islands" the Sheikh on whose behalf representations have been made by His Majesty's Government, and added that in consequence "my Government cannot in any way approve the attitude that the British Government have adopted on the pretext of having treaties with the above-mentioned Sheikh, and cannot accept resulting declaration which you make of protecting him."

Tel. from Pol. Res. to S. of S. for I., Sept. 26 1928, P. 5227.

Teh. tel. to F.O., 247, Aug. 21 1928, P. 4718.

22. The Note left room for doubt as to whether the Persian challenge of the independence of the Sheikh in question was directed to his status as regards Tamb and Abu Musa, to which a claim is preferred by Persia, or to his status as a Trucial Chief on the Arab Coast. The Chargé d'Affaires at Teheran was, however, instructed in reply to communicate officially the text of the Exclusive Agreement of 1892 with all the Trucial Chiefs, and to state that His Majesty's Government entirely failed to understand the Persian statement, and could not admit direct dealings between the Chiefs and the Persian Government. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs added, "You will realise that *vis-à-vis* of Foreign Powers, there is no distinction for a purpose like the present between the Sheikh of Ras-el-Khaima and the other Trucial Chiefs, and effect of Persian Note is to challenge our right to protect any of them from external aggression . . . . the status of His Majesty's Government on the Arabian coast is not open to discussion, nor can they recognise any Persian claim on that side of the Gulf."

F.O. tel. 186, Sept. 4 1928.

23. A Persian reply, holding to the views expressed in their earlier Note and adding that "all agreements made with Trucial Chiefs which harm or limit the rights and interests of Persia cannot be recognised as valid or legally be cited as reason for measures against Persian Government" has since been received. The Political Resident reports, moreover, that the Governor of Bushire is alleged to have received instructions from Teheran that Persia recognises no Arab rulers on the Arab coast of the Gulf, and that all persons belonging to and arriving from Katr and the Trucial Coast (as from Muscat, Koweit and Bahrein) are to be considered Persian subjects and Persian passports issued to them. It seems clear in the circumstances that the possibility of a formal claim by Persia to suzerainty on the Trucial Coast, whether based on her temporary control of portions of that coast in the early eighteenth century† or on intrigues such as that unsuccessfully undertaken by the Sartip on her behalf in 1887,‡ and subsequently repudiated by the Persian Government, cannot be ignored. The seriousness of the issues to which such a claim would give rise, if pressed, needs no emphasis.

Teh. tel. 278, Sept. 21 1928, P. 5238.

Tel. from Pol. Res. to S. of S. for I., T. 336, Sept. 17 1928, P. 5085.

† Lor. i, 631.

‡ Lor. i, 737.



IV.—Summary.

24. The extension to the coast of the authority of Ibn Saud and the influence of the Wahabi movement, the reassertion of Persian authority in the Persian Gulf, and the question of an Imperial air route along the north Arabian coast, have combined to invest the Trucial Sheikhdoms with a new importance. If the air route is to materialise; if His Majesty's Government, in the light of the report of the Persian Gulf Sub-Committee, remain of the opinion that the maintenance of British influence in the Gulf is a matter of paramount importance, alike from the Imperial and from the Indian standpoint; and if they are no longer to enjoy on the south Persian coast the privileged position which they have enjoyed in the past; then the consolidation of their influence on the north Arabian shore is a matter of very much greater and more definite importance than at any earlier period.

25. If, however, that influence is to be maintained and consolidated, the fact that the Trucial Chiefs are guaranteed (even though to an extent difficult precisely to define) the protection of His Majesty's Government, and are forbidden to communicate with outside Powers or to receive their representatives, necessitates a clear understanding as to the extent to which His Majesty's Government are in a position and are prepared to defend their interests, whether against Persia or against Ibn Saud.

26. Of the two, **Persia** presents the less serious problem. Even should she seriously put forward claims to suzerainty on the Arab coast, she is not, as matters stand, in a position to enforce them, nor could His Majesty's Government acquiesce in her pursuit of an active policy of aggression on the north Arabian coast, any more than in those Trucial islands in the Gulf which they have recognised as vested in the Trucial Chiefs, without resiling from the policy which they have hitherto consistently pursued. Moreover, the Trucial Sheikhs and their tribesmen are bound to Persia by ties neither of race nor of religion, while the north Arabian shore (as distinct from the Trucial islands, certain of which appear to contain valuable mineral deposits) offers no commercial or pecuniary reward to justify an active Persian interest.

27. **Ibn Saud, and the Wahabi movement** of which he is the representative, constitute a much more serious problem. In the first place, in the words of Sheikh Hamad of Bahrein, Ibn Saud is "the one big Arab ruler, and it is natural for all the smaller Arab Sheikhs . . . to look up to him and try to please him."* Historically, he has claims of standing to a predominant influence on the Trucial Coast, and geographically his extension to that coast would, but for the presence of His Majesty's Government, be a natural process. The special tenets of the Wahabi creed are familiar to the Trucial tribesmen; certain at any rate of the Trucial Sheikhdoms are traditionally strongly Wahabi in outlook; while racially the Trucial Arabs and the Wahabis of the interior descend from common stocks.

* Letter from P.A., Bahrein, to Pol. Res., April 14 1927. P. 2194/27.

28. It is clear that in these circumstances the problem of preventing the absorption of the Trucial Sheikhdoms by Ibn Saud or their gradual penetration by Wahabi influence is one of great difficulty, the more so in view of the known Wahabi sentiments of certain of the Trucial Sheikhs. The danger of possible military aggression by the King of the Hejaz and of Nejd may be discounted so long as his general relations with His Majesty's Government remain friendly, and the Government of India have already expressed the view (see para. 15 above) that they are justified, in the light of past history, in relying for security against the danger of Wahabi encroachments on the treaty engagements into which Ibn Saud has entered with His Majesty's Government. But while this is true of an aggressive military policy, it appears almost impossible for His Majesty's Government effectively to prevent the penetration by peaceful means of the Trucial States by Ibn Saud and his adherents – a process the more difficult to combat for the reasons given in the preceding paragraph.

29. As matters stand, the most that it appears possible for His Majesty's Government usefully to do is to arrange for the showing of the flag by His Majesty's ships along the Trucial Coast, possibly to a greater extent even than at present; to construe in a strict sense the undertakings given by



Ibn Saud in the Treaty of Jeddah of 1927; and to keep a close watch for action, whether prompted by Ibn Saud himself or the independent work of over-zealous lieutenants, which can be regarded as calling for remonstrance, in view of the terms of the treaty. The value of the constant reminder of British power which is given by a naval patrol cannot be exaggerated; the importance of the support of His Majesty's ships to a ruler threatened by a fanatical hinterland has been illustrated in recent years, though in different circumstances, in Muscat. The establishment of an air route, should His Majesty's Government decide upon that course, will go some way towards the assertion on the north Arabian coast of the influence of His Majesty's Government. The payment of subsidies to the Chiefs, should that prove ultimately unavoidable, in connection with the establishment of air stations, may farther be of value in consolidating British influence; the elimination of British influence from the south Persian shore, and the possibility that Persia may question the retention of the Residency at Bushire, may lead to a reconsideration of political arrangements in the Gulf, one effect of which would be to fix the headquarters of the Resident on or near the Arabian littoral of the Gulf; but while for the moment the objections urged by the Government of India to the adoption of the policy of active intervention in the affairs of the Trucial Coast suggested by the Political Resident (para. 13 above) appear conclusive, the possibility that at some later stage consideration of that policy may be necessitated by developments which cannot at present be foreseen, is one which must be faced.

30. To sum up. His Majesty's Government by their treaty engagements control the foreign relations of the Trucial Chiefs, to whom, in addition, they have promised either directly or by implication a degree of protection which it is difficult precisely to define. Their written engagements to the Chiefs have been supplemented by utterances such as that made by Lord Curzon, when Viceroy of India, on his visit to the Gulf in 1903, an appeal to the terms of which has so recently as the summer of the present year* been made by certain of the Chiefs affected. The original reason for contracting the engagements in question was the suppression of piracy, the slave traffic and the arms traffic, and the preservation of the maritime peace of the Gulf. In the changed circumstances of the present day, those arguments for the maintenance of a predominant British influence are supplemented by the wider political considerations referred to in para. 21 above. But the change in the general situation which has made the maintenance of British influence on the Trucial Coast of greater general importance from the Indian and the Imperial point of view is accompanied by the probable necessity of facing wider liabilities, or of interpreting in a more generous or a more binding manner the obligations of His Majesty's Government for the defence of the interests of the Sheikhs protected.

Lor. i, [illegible]

* Tel. from S.N.O. to Admy., [illegible]

V.—Points referred to in connection with Deliberations of the Persian Gulf Sub-Committee.

31. The following points have been specifically referred to in connection with the deliberations of the Persian Gulf Sub-Committee:—

(a) On the Arabian coast Koweit and the so-called Trucial Chiefs are continually threatened by Ibn Saud. Is the maintenance of their independence necessary for British purposes, and, if so, how is it to be secured? (P.G. 3 VIII.)

(b) Policy of His Majesty's Government *vis-à-vis* Ibn Saud, with particular reference to . . . . Trucial Chiefs and air route. (P.G. 6, 2 (c), 1.)

(c) Policy of His Majesty's Government towards the Trucial Chiefs (compare Colonel Haworth's proposal for a greater degree of interference and support, with a view to securing that they shall not be absorbed by Ibn Saud). (P.G. 6, 2 (c) 2.)

(d) Steps necessary on the north Arabian coast in connection with slavery (and arms traffic). (P.G. 6, 2 (c), 3.)



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VI.—Views of the Government of India.

32. The Government of India are definitely of opinion that the alienation of the Arab Protectorates would be highly impolitic from the point of view of His Majesty's Government,† and, in connection with the deliberations of the Persian Gulf Sub-Committee, have expressed the view‡ that the maintenance of the independence of the Sheikhdoms (absorption of which by Ibn Saud or his successor might easily lead to a speedy relapse of the Gulf into the chaos from which it has been rescued with so much difficulty) is essential. Here, as in the case of Bahrein, Koweit and Muscat, they consider that so long as Arab opinion is not alienated by an attempt at undue Westernisation, our present veiled protectorate suffices not only against European encroachment, but against the encroachments of the Wahabi State. That protectorate can, they remark, at need be more explicitly asserted.

† Tel. from Viceroy, [illegible] S., Sept. 4 1928, P. 4781.

‡ P. G. 8.



EL KATR, 1908–16.

(*Communicated by India Office and revised to 5th September* 1928.)

1. The El Katr (or Qatar) Peninsula, which is governed by the Sheikhs of the Thani family, lies south of Ojair, in the district of Qatif, the most southernly point to which, with the exception of Koweit, His Majesty's Government prior to the War of 1914 recognised continuous Turkish influence. It lies, on the other hand, north of El Odeid, to which the Trucial Sheikh of Abu Dhabi was allowed to assert his rights of possession in 1878, and which prior to 1916 formed the western boundary of the territories of the Trucial Sheikhs. The status of the Peninsula formed the subject of lengthy discussion in the period prior to 1908, details of which will be found in the Foreign Office Memorandum of 1908.

2. The vexed question of the status of El Katr was finally disposed of in the Anglo-Turkish negotiations of 1912–14. Under the unratified Anglo-Turkish Convention of 29th July 1913, the Ottoman Government renounced all rights to the Peninsula, which was, as in the past, to continue to be governed by the Sheikhs of the Thani family, while His Majesty's Government engaged not to permit the Sheikh of Bahrein to interfere in the internal affairs of El Katr, to threaten its autonomy or to annex it. A supplementary article reserved the rights of the inhabitants of Bahrein to visit the island of Zakhnuniyah for fishing purposes, as in the past.

3. A new situation arose with the conquest of Hasa by Ibn Saud in the course of 1913. El Katr, like the Oman coast, formed, in his view, part of his ancestral domains, to which he could therefore prefer a claim as of right.* But the Amir was warned at the end of the year that non-interference with El Katr was a condition of the maintenance of friendly relations with His Majesty's Government,† and no difficulty in consequence arose. The conclusion of a formal treaty between El Katr and His Majesty's Government, which, other considerations apart, was in the immediately pre-war period of much importance in connection with the arms traffic, was postponed‡ until the final ratification of the Anglo-Turkish Convention, and so had not been disposed of on the outbreak of the European War.

4. In common with the rulers of the other States in the Gulf, the Sheikh of El Katr was notified by the Political Resident of the outbreak of war with Turkey in November 1914,§ and throughout the period of the war maintained a friendly attitude towards His Majesty's Government.

5. Under the treaty concluded between His Majesty's Government and Ibn Saud on the 26th December 1915, the Ruler of Nejd undertook to refrain from aggression on, or interference with, "the territories of . . . the Sheikhs of Katr and the Oman coast, who are under the protection of the British Government, and who have treaty relations with the said Government, and the limits of their territories shall be hereafter determined."

6. The outbreak of the European War, which led to a falling off in the arms traffic in the Gulf, rendered the conclusion of a definitive treaty with El Katr less urgent, and it was not until May 1915|| that the question was revived. Lengthy negotiation proved necessary before a satisfactory agreement could be reached, and it was not until 3rd November 1916¶ that a treaty was finally concluded between the Sheikh and His Majesty's Government. The treaty, the terms of which are summarised in the précis of treaties appended to the present Memorandum, secured to the Sheikh the advantages conferred under the Trucial treaties on the Sheikhs of Trucial Oman, while imposing on him the obligations in regard to piracy, the slave traffic, the arms traffic, the grant of concessions, the cession, sale, gift, lease

* P.A. Bahrein to Pol. Res., Dec. 28 1913, P. [illegible]/14.

† Lr. from Pol. Res. to Ibn Saud, Sept. 11 1913, P. [illegible]/13.

‡ P. [illegible]/13, [illegible]/14.

§ Lr. from Pol. Res. to G. of I., 243, Sept. 1 1914, P. [illegible].

|| Viceroy to S. of S. for I., May 8 1915, P. [illegible]/15. G. of I. to Pol. Res., May 12 1915, P. [illegible]/15.

¶ P. [illegible]/16, [illegible]/16, [illegible]/17.



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or transfer of territory to other Powers, and the maintenance of relations with foreign Powers already accepted by those Chiefs. In order to secure the signature of the Sheikh, it was agreed that the articles of the treaty (7, 8 and 9) which related to the admission of British subjects to Katr for trading purposes and their protection while so engaged, the admission of an Agent on behalf of His Majesty's Government, and the establishment of post and telegraph offices in Katr, should remain inoperative for the present, while a minor concession was made in respect of the retention by the Sheikh and his dependents of negro slaves actually in their possession, on the understanding that they would receive "fair and just treatment."

7. The one respect of importance in which the treaty went beyond the normal type of Trucial treaty was that it contained an undertaking that the good offices of His Majesty's Government should be granted to the Sheikh in the event of unprovoked aggression against him by *land* within the territories of Katr (Article XI). The assurance in question did not, however, in practice impose any very serious liability on His Majesty's Government, as was shown when a tentative appeal was made to it by the Sheikh in 1921 (see para. 10 of Memorandum on the Trucial Sheikhs, 1908-28, on page 88).

8. The treaty was ratified by the Governor-General of India in Council on 28th March 1918.* The history of Katr from the date of its conclusion is dealt with in the Memorandum on the Trucial Chiefs on page 88, but it may be recorded here that the position of its ruler was recognised on the conclusion of the European War by the grant to him of the C.I.E. (3rd June 1919) and of a salute of seven guns—honours of which he is the only recipient among the chiefs of the Trucial Coast.

* G. of I. Desp. 23, April 18 1918, P. 2618/18.



Status of the Islands of Tamb, Little Tamb, Abu Musa, and Sirri.

(Communicated by India Office and revised to 24th August 1928.)

I.—Introductory.

1. Tamb, Abu Musa, and Sirri are three small islands lying well out in the Persian Gulf between the Trucial Arab coast and the Persian island of Kishm. **Little Tamb**, an uninhabited and waterless island, 1 mile long by ¼ mile wide, 8 miles to the west of Tamb, was agreed by the Government of India, the India Office and the Foreign Office in 1908, to depend from that island.* **Tamb** itself is an island 17 miles south of the south-west point of Kishm Island and 46 miles north-west of the nearest point on the coast of Trucial Oman, roughly circular in shape, and about 2¼ miles in diameter. A lighthouse was erected on it by His Majesty's Government in 1913 (see paras. 25 to 28 below). It is sparsely inhabited and almost waterless. It appears probable that deposits of red oxide are to be found both in it and in Little Tamb. **Abu Musa** is a larger and more thickly populated island, a few miles nearer to Shargah in Trucial Oman than to Lingah in Persia, with good supplies of water, and valuable deposits of red oxide which have been under exploitation for some years, and royalty in respect of which is paid to the ruling family of Shargah. **Sirri**, 40 miles south by west of Bustaneh, the nearest point on the Persian coast, is more prosperous and fertile than Tamb, and, like it, contains deposits of red oxide, though these are apparently unimportant.†

* [illegible] Dec. [illegible] 1908, P. 2111/08, [illegible] F.O. to [illegible], Jan. 13 1909, P. [illegible]

Lon. [illegible]

Lon. [illegible]

Lon. [illegible]

† Pol. Res. to G. of I., Jan. 23 1908, P. [illegible]

2. The history and status of these islands is identical. While, however, the Trucial Sheikh of Shargah on the Arab coast still controls Tamb and Abu Musa, on which he flies his flag, His Majesty's Government, and the Sheikh under protest, have since 1887 tacitly acquiesced in Persian occupation of Sirri. The Persian flag was stated to have been hoisted on Little Tamb in 1904‡ at the time of the Persian aggression on Tamb and Abu Musa. It was presumably removed at the same time as it was removed from those islands; but the Political Resident reported in November 1908 that the Shargah flag had not been flown on Little Tamb by the Sheikh.§ It is not known whether steps have since been taken to do this.

‡ Pol. Res. to G. of I., April 15 1904.

§ Tel. from Viceroy to S. of S. for I., Nov. 24 1908, P. 2111/08.

3. The islands are claimed by the Trucial Sheikhs of Shargah as representative of the Jowasimi Arab chiefs, one section of whom in the 18th century established themselves by force or alliance at Lingah and elsewhere in South Persia. The Persian claim to the islands has in the past been based on the fact that the Jowasimi Arab Sheikhs of Lingah, under whose administrative control they were for many years prior to 1887, had for long been Persian subjects governing Lingah as Persian officials, and it was suggested that it was in this capacity that they had administered the islands, which had become Persian territory. The latest Persian claim is based on the fact that the islands, together with Farur, are shown as Persian in a War Office map of 1887 of which copies were presented to the Shah by the Minister at Teheran, under the orders of Lord Salisbury, in July 1888 (cp. paras. 34 and 36 below).

Tel. [illegible] 234 to F.O., Aug. 28 1928, P. [illegible]

4. The recent reassertion of the Persian claim to the island of Tamb renders necessary a more detailed examination of the history of that island, and of the islands of Abu Musa and Sirri, the status of which is identical, than would otherwise have been required. Persian ownership of Farur does not appear to have been disputed in the past; the island is in any event in a different category from Abu Musa, Tamb and Sirri, and no reference is made to it in the present Memorandum.

II.—History of the Islands prior to 1887.

5. It has proved impossible to trace any reference to the history of the islands in the 17th and 18th centuries. From 1720 the Arabs of Ras-al-



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Khaima on the Trucial Coast (hereafter referred to as the Jowasimi) had been active on the Persian littoral of the Gulf, on which before 1727 they seized Basida. In 1737 they were attacked in their own territory by Persia and appear to have made submission,* but it does not seem that Persia retained any hold on Ras-al-Khaima.

6. About 1750 a portion of the Jowasimi tribe crossed the Gulf to aid the Persian Governor of Bander Abbas and Ormuz against the then Shah, when they took possession of Lingah, opposite the island of Kishm, and other places on the Persian Coast. Lingah they continued to hold until the deposition by Persia of the last Arab Sheikh of Lingah in 1887. But for a number of years before that date, while Lingah up to about 1882 remained a tribally administered Arab principality, the ruling Sheikhs had gradually come under the power of the Persian Government, having finally acknowledged themselves Persian subjects, paying to the Persian Governor-General of Fars such tribute as he could exact from them, and governing Lingah as Persian officials.

7. It is not clear whether any effective dominion had been exercised by Persia in the islands of Tamb, Abu Musa and Sirri prior to 1750. It seems entirely clear that no effective dominion was exercised in any of them by her between that date and the seizure of Sirri in 1887. In the intervening period, if not from a much earlier date, the islands were apparently part of the hereditary estates of the Jowasimi Arab Sheikhs, the Sheikhs on the Arab shore having an equal interest with those on the Persian littoral. Their management, administration, and jurisdiction had, however, for many years prior to 1887 by common consent been vested in the chief Jowasimi Sheikh of the Persian coast, viz. the Sheikh of Lingah, but in his capacity of Jowasimi Sheikh and not of Persian official†—a state of things which would appear to have arisen from the fact that Tamb was for a period used by Lingah Jowasimi more than by other Jowasimi.¶ No recognition of Persian suzerainty in respect of any of the islands had been made by the Jowasimi Arabs of Oman.

8. Up to about 1873, owing to the close connection existing between Tamb and Lingah, the Residency authorities at Bushire took the view that Tamb was Persian, and in the period ending with 1879 several enquiries regarding it are stated to exist in the Residency records. In 1882, however, in reply to an enquiry, the Residency Agent stationed at Shargah, on the Trucial Coast, furnished the Resident with translations of letters to the Sheikh of Shargah which established the rights of the Trucial Chiefs. Copies of these letters were produced in another connection in 1900 by the Residency Agent, who stated that he had himself seen the originals. Endeavours are now being made to see if the originals can be produced.||

9. The Persian claim was first asserted in 1887, and has been repeated in 1904, 1923, 1926 and 1928. The history of these incidents is as follows.

III.—Occupation of Sirri by Persia, 1887.‡

10. In the year 1887 an armed Persian party, with two small cannon, was sent to erect a flagstaff and hoist the Persian flag on Sirri. The Political Resident, the Minister at Teheran, having enquired§ whether the islands were under British protection, and whether any action at Teheran was necessary, replied that Sirri and Tamb were beyond the zone of Persian interference, and that the islands belonged to Arab Chiefs under British protection in common with Arabs of the Persian littoral. The Resident separately reported to the Government of India that the islands formed part of the hereditary estates of the Jowasimi Arab Sheikhs; that for many years, however, their management, administration and jurisdiction had by common consent been vested in the chief Jowasimi Sheikh on the Persian coast, viz., the Sheikh of Lingah for the time being; that the Jowasimi Sheikhs domiciled on the Persian coast had acquired the status of subjects of Persia, and those who governed Lingah had been, in fact, Persian officials qua Lingah; that the Persian claim was doubtless based on these grounds; and that, were it not for the fact that the Arab Sheikhs of the Oman coast jointly owned the islands, the Persian position could not be disputed. The

* Lor. I, 631-2.

Lor. I, 2013-4.

† Pol. Res. to Minister, Teheran, Aug. 12 1908.

¶ Tel. from Pol. Res. to S. of S. for I., T. 234, Aug. 22 1928. P. 4108.

|| Tel. from Pol. Res. to S. of S. for I., T. 234, Aug. 22 1928.

‡ G. of I. Proceedings, Sept. 1888.

§ Tel. to Res., Sept. 24 1887.



Resident supported his statement with the translation of a letter written in 1877 by the Sheikh Ali-bin-Khalifah of Lingah to the Chief of Ras-al-Khaima, in which the former "admits that Tamb is a dependency of the Kowasim of Oman, and that the Persians have no property there nor any right to interfere, save with the consent of the Chief of Ras-al-Khaima." In conclusion, he expressed the opinion that the Persian Government had no good title to the islands in question.||

11. The Sheikh of Shargah protested to the Resident on 10th October 1887 against the Persian action at Sirri, and asked that similar action at Tamb might be prevented. The Government of India felt, however, some difficulty as to the action to be taken, in view of the fact that Persian Jowasimis had joint rights on Sirri and Tamb, and that one Arab Sheikh only had appealed, and it was agreed, in consultation with the Resident, that, no overt action having been taken by Persia in the case of Tamb, representations at Teheran should be confined to the question of Sirri.*

12. On representations being made, the Persian Government stated† that for nine years Sirri and Tamb had paid taxes to the Persian Government, and that, documents in support of the Persian claim being at Bushire, the Governor had been instructed to explain matters to the Resident. The Governor, however, informed the Resident that "he had no documents relating to the Persian claim, and that he had wired to the Amin-es-Sultan excusing himself from discussing the question with the Resident."‡ Enquiry was independently made of the Chief of Shargah as to the Amin-es-Sultan's statement. The Chief's reply explained the connection of the Governors of Lingah with the island of Sirri, and added that Tamb was uninhabited, and that no taxes had been paid to Persia. He further enclosed three letters from Chiefs of Lingah, admitting the Chief of Shargah's ownership of Tamb.§

13. The Persian Government had meanwhile produced five official letters from a former Sheikh of Lingah (Yusuf-bin-Mahomed) in support of the Persian claim to the two islands.|| The Resident,¶ after examination, replied "that he considered that the documents did not bear out the Persian claim, and that weight should not be attached to the statements of the Sheikh in question, who was a dependant and servant of the Jowasimi Sheikh, Ali-bin-Khalifah [*cp.* para. 10 above], whom he murdered in order himself to become Chief of Lingah," and, the Persian Minister appearing to rely on a statement of Sheikh Yusuf that he had "gone to the island of Sirri to inspect and recover Government (Persian) dues," the Resident wrote that he considered that "this statement could not be accepted as establishing or even supporting the Persian claim to possession, nor as sufficient to deprive the Jowasimi Arab family of their ancient and previously recognised rights on that island." (It may be added that on 29th March 1884 Sheikh Yusuf wrote to the Chief of Ras-al-Khaima fully admitting the possession of Tamb by the Jowasimis.)§§ The Resident further pointed out that the Jowasimi Sheikhs of Lingah had usually also been Deputy-Governors of Lingah on behalf of Persia; they exercised authority on Sirri island, but it was *qua* Jowasimi Sheikh and not *qua* Persian Governor.

14. A reply on the lines of the Resident's report was sent to the Amin-es-Sultan by Her Majesty's Minister on 2nd March 1888. The Persian Government, on enquiry being made** as to the grounds on which they had annexed Sirri, replied†† that it was in their possession, being a dependency of Lingah, to which the Legation replied that jurisdiction over Sirri had been exercised by the Governors of Lingah solely in their capacity of Jowasimi Sheikhs, that the traditional rights over Sirri of the Jowasimi Sheikhs had never been disputed and were generally recognised, that the hoisting of the Persian flag altered the existing status, and that it was on this ground that Her Majesty's Government desired that reasons should be shown for this alteration. The note, after adding that while "possession, if of long standing, and undisputed, undoubtedly carried considerable weight . . . the argument would scarcely govern in the present instance," concluded by asking the Persian Government to communicate "the proofs they possess of the former dependence of Sirri island on Persian authority."

|| Pol. Res. to G. of I., Sept. 27 1887.

* Tel. from Pol. Res. to G. of I., Nov. 13 1887.

† Tel. from C. d'A., Teheran, to Pol. Res., Dec. 10 1887.

‡ Tel. from Pol. Res. to C. d'A., Teheran, Dec. 12 1887.

§ Pol. Res. to C. d'A., Teheran, Feb. 22 1888.

|| C. d'A., Teheran, to Res., Jan. 2 1888.

¶ Res. to C. d'A., Jan. 23 1888.

§§ Pol. Sec.'s Memo. of May 1885, P. [illegible]

** Note of Mar. 8 1888.

†† Note of Mar. 28 1888.



15. On the 28th April 1888 the Resident communicated to the Minister at Teheran a copy of the translation of a report drawn up locally for the Amin-es-Sultan, which he had obtained privately, relative to the Persian claims It appears that "there was nothing fresh in this report beyond a new claim put forward to the island of Abu Musa," which, again to quote the Resident, "has no justification whatever." In the summer of the same year (26th July) the Minister telegraphed to Bushire that a reply had now been received from the Persian Government that "as the Jowasimi Sheikhs were Persian Governors of Lingah, they considered no further proof of the justice of their claim necessary." To this the Resident replied that the Persian reply begged the question, and that the Arab contention as regards Sirri was that the Jowasimi Sheikhs of Lingah represented the family, and derived no right from their position towards the Persian Government.

16. In order to facilitate the disposal of other negotiations, His Majesty's Government decided in August 1888 tacitly to acquiesce in the Persian occupation of Sirri. Save, however, by such acquiescence, to which reference was made in official correspondence with Persia in 1904 (see para. 21 below), they have never in any way admitted or withdrawn their original objections to the claim of the Shah's Government to the ownership of the island, while the Political Resident stated in 1904 that it was equally clear from the Residency records that the Jowasimi Arab Sheikhs of the Pirate Coast had never voluntarily dropped their claim, which they had formally reiterated in 1895, to proprietary rights over Sirri, any more than over Abu Musa and Tamb.

IV.—Temporary Persian Occupation of Abu Musa and Tamb, 1904.

17. In January 1903 the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf reported that, trade having to a large extent been diverted from Lingah as the result of the short-sighted policy of the Belgian Customs officials, Lingah merchants were endeavouring to arrange with the Bombay and Persian Navigation Company to make the island of **Abu Musa** a port of call. He added that, in view of the Sirri incident of 1887, he was apprehensive lest the result might be the advancing of a territorial claim to this island by Persia. The Resident stated that the island undoubtedly belonged to the Jowasimi Sheikh of Shargah, that the Jowasimis did not, however, fly a flag on the island, and that it might be well to advise the Sheikh of Shargah to do so as a sign of ownership. This course was approved and action taken accordingly.

18. The question having arisen of advising the Sheikh of Ras-al-Khaima (a sheikhdom at that time and now dependent from the Sheikh of Shargah) to adopt a similar course in regard to the island of **Tamb**, which belonged to the Ras-al-Khaima section of the Jowasimis, the Resident reported that, so far as he was aware, sovereignty over that island had never been asserted by Persia, that the Sheikh of Shargah in his existing capacity as Ruler of Ras-al-Khaima claimed it as an appanage of the Jowasimis of the Arab coast, and that he was in possession of documentary evidence in the shape of letters from two former Arab Chiefs of Lingah admitting the claim of the Jowasimis of the Arab coast to those islands, as against the claim of the Jowasimis of Lingah. It was decided that the Chief should be advised to hoist his flag on Tamb as on Abu Musa, and this was done.

19. In April 1904 the Viceroy telegraphed that the Belgian Customs officials had placed guards on Abu Musa and Tamb, forcibly removed the Arab flags, erected new flagstaffs and hoisted the Persian flag on both islands. This action led to immediate protest by the Sheikh of Shargah, who appealed to His Majesty's Government, under his treaty relations with them, to take the necessary steps to prevent such interference in his territory.

20. The Government of India, who took a serious view of the incident, proposed* to despatch a gunboat to the islands, with a representative of the Sheikh of Shargah on board, to haul down the Persian flag, reinstate the Jowasimi flag and remove the guards to Persian territory. It was decided,† however, to give the Persian Government the opportunity to withdraw from the position they had taken up, and on the 24th May the Minister reported

* P. [illegible]/04.

† F.O. to I.O., April 23 1904; I.O. to F.O., May 4 1904, P. [illegible]/04.



that they had telegraphed orders to Bushire to remove the flags and guards from Abu Musa and Tamb, while reserving their right to discuss with His Majesty's Government the respective claims to the island. Their Note,‡ however, stated that Persia considered "these two islands as its property," and proposed that "neither party" should hoist flags in them pending settlement of the question.

21. The Note of reply sent to the Persian Government on 15th June 1904, while expressing willingness to transmit to the Government of India any proofs that the claims of Persia to the ownership of these islands outweighed those of the Sheikh of Shargah, stated that the suggestion that the Sheikh of Shargah should not be permitted to replace his flag, hauled down by the Persian Customs officials, could not be accepted, and went on: "I would remind you, in this connection, that we have not insisted on the Persian Government removing their flag from the island of Sirri till the controversy between the two Governments as to the ownership of the island, which originated many years ago, has been reciprocally settled. The position would have been different if the Sheikh of Shargah had removed an existing flag from Tamb and Abu Musa; what he did was to hoist his own flag upon the islands, which were not yet formally occupied by any other Government, and he has the right to fly it as the first occupant until his lawful possession of these islands is disproved."

22. The Persian flags were removed, and the Jowasimi flag of the Chief of Shargah re-hoisted in June 1904. No serious attempt was made by Persia to produce proof of Persian ownership,* and the discussion lapsed, though in 1905 a complaint by Persia of the erection of new buildings at Tamb by the Sheikh of Shargah was investigated and found to be baseless.†

23. The opportunity was taken to make it clear to Persia that the status of Sirri was still *sub judice*, a view in which she acquiesced, and the Persian Government were warned in 1905 that "the revival of their claim to Tamb meant the revival of ours to Sirri."

‡ June 14 1904, P. [illegible]

* Lor. I, 746, 2138.

† Tel. [illegible] to Pol. Res., May 29 1905, P. [illegible]; Pol. Res. to Tel., June [illegible] 1905.

Lor. I, [illegible]

V.—Status of Sirri, 1909.

24. The question of granting a concession to mine red oxide on Sirri having arisen in 1908–9, His Majesty's Government, after consultation with the Government of India, informed‡ a British firm that, while the status of the island was in dispute, they had never acquiesced in the Persian claim to dispose of concessions on it regardless of Great Britain; and the Minister at Teheran presented a protest to the Persian Government in April 1909 against their action in granting a concession, in which he reminded them of the caveat entered by His Majesty's Government and asked them to arrange for the discontinuance of operations on the island by their concessionnaire.§

‡ S. of S. for I. to Viceroy, May [illegible] 1908, P. [illegible]; F.O. to Tel., Sept. [illegible] 1908, P. [illegible]; F.O. to Messrs. Ellinger, Jan. [illegible] 1909, P. [illegible]

§ Tel. tel. [illegible] to F.O., April [illegible] 1909, P. [illegible]

VI.—1912-3: Erection of a Lighthouse on Tamb Island. Communications to Persian Government and to Sheikh of Shargah.

25. Early in 1912 it was decided to erect and maintain a lighthouse on Tamb Island.‖ With the approval of His Majesty's Government no communication on the subject was made to Persia,¶ but the Political Resident, Sir Percy Cox, was authorised** to obtain the consent of the Sheikh of Shargah, which was granted by the Sheikh subject to an assurance that his rights of sovereignty were not affected.†† Sir Percy Cox, in writing to the Sheikh, added that while it was desirable that the Shargah flag should always be *en evidence* on Tamb, "now at all events this island will be preserved for you by the mere presence of the lighthouse."

26. In October 1912, in reply to an enquiry by the Governor of the Gulf Ports, Sir Percy Cox stated‡‡ that, with the concurrence of the Sheikh of Shargah, a light was about to be erected there. His Excellency replied that "there was no doubt that the island properly belonged to Persia and that they had to thank the blatant action of the Customs in 1904 for spoiling their case in regard thereto. I rejoined that we considered . . . . that it

‖ P. [illegible]/12.

¶ Lord Crewe to G. of I., Secret Desp. [illegible], Mar. [illegible] 1912, P. [illegible]; Tel. from Viceroy, May [illegible] 1912, P. [illegible]

** Tel. from S. of S. for I. to Viceroy, June [illegible] 1912, P. [illegible]/12.

†† Letters from Pol. Res. to Sheikh, Sept. [illegible] 1912, Oct. [illegible] 1912, P. [illegible]

‡‡ Letter from Pol. Res. to G. of I., Oct. [illegible] 1912, P. [illegible]/12.



was beyond doubt that the Sheikh of the Jowasimi of Oman owned the island, and, as in dealing with the question we had to reckon with patent facts, it seemed waste of time for us to discuss the question now."

27. In February 1913 the Persian Foreign Office raised the question with the Minister at Teheran, urging that the ownership of the island was contested by Persia. Sir Percy Cox, on reference being made to him, intimated§§ that he had recently made it clear to the Governor of the Gulf Ports that the ownership of Tamb was not open to question, and added that "since the correspondence of 1905 the subjects of the Sheikh of Shargah and his flag have remained established on the island"; that if the question was now reopened His Majesty's Government would no doubt revive the question of Sirri; but that a flat refusal to discuss it would probably be best.

§§ Tel. from Pol. Res. to Min., Feb. 25 1913, P. 1013/13.

28. The matter does not appear to have been taken further by Persia. The light was exhibited at Tamb on 15th July 1913, and His Majesty's Government agreed that notification of its erection should be made to foreign consular representatives in the usual manner by the Government of India.||||

|||| F.O. to I.O., July 2 1913, P. 2647/13.

VII.—Statements made by His Majesty's Government to German Government as to ownership of Abu Musa, 1907-14.

29. It may be remarked at this stage that in the lengthy negotiations which took place with the German Government between 1907 and 1914 over the claim of Messrs. Wönckhaus in respect of the cancellation of their red oxide concession in Abu Musa by the Sheikh of Shargah, no reference was made to the Persian Government, who were, indeed, privately reminded by the Chargé d'Affaires in 1908 of the incident of 1904, and warned against any attempt to renew the Persian claim.* His Majesty's Government consistently referred, in their communications to the German Government, to the "sovereignty" exercised in Abu Musa by the Sheikh, and a quantity of local evidence was produced to show that the ownership of Abu Musa vested in the ruling Sheikh of the Jowasimi of Oman residing at Shargah.† It would clearly have been impossible for His Majesty's Government to have taken the very definite line actually taken by them *vis-à-vis* Germany had the status of the island been, in their view, a matter at all open to dispute.

* Teh. tel. 4 to F.O., Jan. 4 1908.

† Cp. e.g. Memo. to German Govt. under Sir E. Grey's letter to Count Metternich, Dec. 8 1911, P. 4919/11.

VIII.—Reassertion of Persian Claim to Tamb and Abu Musa, 1923.

30. In 1923 the Minister at Teheran reported that he had learned confidentially that the Persian concessionnaire of the Hormuz red oxide concession, Moin-at-Tujjar, a person of great wealth and considerable political influence, was urging the Persian Government to raise the Persian claim to Abu Musa, couple it with that to Bahrein, and refer both to the League of Nations.‡

Sir P. Loraine was instructed by the Foreign Office to draw the attention of the Prime Minister to the incident of 1904, when His Majesty's Government had been prepared to take naval action to remove the Persian flag from Tamb and Abu Musa, and hint that revival of the Persian claim might lead His Majesty's Government to take the measures then contemplated.§

‡ Teh. tel. 121 to F.O., April 27 1923, P. 1601/23.

§ F.O. tel. 88, May 1 1923, P. 1647/23.

31. The Minister made the required communication to the Prime Minister, making, however, no reference to Tamb in his Aide Memoire. His Highness made no reply on the matter of Abu Musa.|| Ten days later a Note asserting Persian rights over both Tamb and Abu Musa, "of which notification was made to His Majesty's Legation in the year 1903-4," having been addressed to the Minister by the Persian Foreign Office, Sir P. Loraine adopted an uncompromising attitude, and returned the Note to the Prime Minister with a strongly worded covering letter.¶ It seemed probable that the despatch of the Note was due to ignorance on the part of the Acting Foreign Minister of the communication which had been made to the Prime Minister, and, the position of His Majesty's Government having been made clear, the incident went no further.

|| Teh. Desp. 230, May 13 1923, P. 2064.

¶ Teh. Desp. 246, May 23 1923, P. 2053.



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IX.—Persian Customs Interference at Abu Musa, 1925-6.

32. In the autumn of 1925 the Persian customs authorities sent a launch to Abu Musa which inspected the red oxide and removed one bag. On a protest being made, they replied that Abu Musa belonged to Persia. Energetic action was taken at Teheran by His Majesty's Minister, who reminded the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs of the 1923 correspondence, and subsequently warned him privately that persistence in the Persian claim would make it necessary "to request the Government of India to despatch a ship of war to Abu Musa to uphold the rights of the Sheikh of Shargah."[illegible] The Persian Government withdrew, and the customs authorities were instructed "not to take any steps in Abu Musa or Tamb pending reply from Ministry of Foreign Affairs regarding status of these islands."

[illegible] Teh. Desp. [illegible] to F.O., May [illegible] 1926, P. [illegible]

X.—Reassertion of Persian Claim to Tamb, 1928.

33. In July 1928 a Persian customs launch, which had been operating from Tamb for about two months, seized off the south of the island a Debai dhow carrying passengers to Khassab, on the Arab coast, with a small cargo of sugar and dates, and brought it to Lingah, where the cargo was confiscated as smuggled and the passengers imprisoned. The incident created a very serious situation on the Trucial Coast, the Trucial Chiefs being restrained only with difficulty from immediate reprisals; and its possible reactions proved a matter of grave concern to the Government of India.

34. Strong diplomatic representations by His Majesty's Government at Teheran secured the release of the dhow and its passengers and crew. The cargo remains under seizure, and a claim for compensation has been met by a reiteration of the Persian claim to ownership of Tamb, based, according to the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, on a British Note dated 27th July 1888, signed by His Majesty's Minister under instructions from the Marquess of Salisbury, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, communicating a map "recently issued by the Intelligence Department of the War Office" for presentation to the Shah on behalf of Her Majesty's Government. The Chargé d'Affaires has indicated that the argument is unsubstantial, while the fact cannot clearly in itself affect the validity of the Arab claim; but it is clear that in the forthcoming negotiations with Persia, not only the immediate Tamb incident, on which the Government of India have expressed themselves very strongly, but the position of Abu Musa, to which also a claim has now been preferred by Persia, (and of Sirri) will come up for disposal.

Teh. tel. [illegible] to F.O., Aug. [illegible] 1928, P. [illegible]

Teh. tel. [illegible], Aug. [illegible] 1928, P. [illegible]

XI.—Summary.

35. The effective occupation of **Sirri** by Persia since 1887, and the tacit acquiescence in that occupation of His Majesty's Government, make it difficult, if not impossible, at this stage to dispute the Persian claim, though His Majesty's Government are not estopped by any formal admission on their part from using the Shargah claim to the island for bargaining purposes.

36. The position is different as regards **Tamb** and **Abu Musa**. At no stage has the Persian claim been formally admitted, and at no stage has it been allowed to pass unquestioned. The argument in support of the latest Persian claim as set out in para. 34 above could be strengthened, so far as it has any value, by reference to the fact that the islands are also shown in Persian colours on Lord Curzon's (unofficial) Map of Persia of 1892, and on the Survey of India Map of 1897.* While, however, the error in question is extremely regrettable from the standpoint of His Majesty's Government, it cannot be taken as a formal declaration by His Majesty's Government of their view of the status of the islands, nor, it is suggested, can it be regarded as of substantial importance in view of the consistent repudiation, before and after the dates mentioned, of the Persian claim.

* Teh. tel. to Viceroy, April [illegible] 1928, P. [illegible]



37. As regards the merits of that claim, the historical summary above shows that the history of the islands prior to 1750 is obscure; that since that date such authority and such effective occupation as there has been has had its source in the Jowasimi Arabs, who between 1750 and 1820 exercised in the Gulf a maritime control uncontested by Persia. There is nothing to show that those Arabs, having obtained a footing on the Persian coast, thence derived authority over outlying islands. Probability suggests rather that they carried with them to their new settlement a position in the islands which they already possessed. The fact that a section of these Arab intruders later acquired the status of Persian subjects, and held their authority on the Persian coast in subordination to the Persian Government as local Chiefs or Governors, cannot affect any original rights the Jowasimi tribes on the Arab and the Jowasimi tribes on the Persian littoral may have had in common; an intimate connection appears to have been maintained between the two sections of the tribe, and the islands remained their common property and did not become Persian territory; nor, the islands being held by a Sheikh only on behalf of the tribes, had an individual power to alienate any sovereign territorial rights which he might enjoy *qua* ruler of these tribes.† Finally, *de facto* possession resting with the Jowasimi Arabs of the Trucial Coast, it would appear to be for Persia, in the absence of evidence at any stage of effective Persian occupation or of acknowledgment by the Trucial Arabs of Persian overlordship in the islands, to prove the case for alteration of the *status quo*.

Pol. Res. to Minister, Tehran, Dec. 12 1929.

† Viceroy to S. of S. for I., Feb. 14 1929, P. 884/29.

38. As between His Majesty's Government and the Trucial Chiefs concerned, the latter, under their treaty engagements, are entitled to the protection of His Majesty's Government and are not themselves allowed to communicate or negotiate direct with any foreign Power. Apart from the fact that their claim to the islands has consistently been upheld by His Majesty's Government, it was on the initiative of His Majesty's Government that the Jowasimi Sheikh of Shargah and Ras-al-Khaima hoisted his flag on Tumb and Abu Musa in 1903 (see paras. 17 and 18 above).

39. The satisfactory disposal of the matter is important in view of its immediate reactions on the Trucial Coast, and the wider reactions on Mohammedan feeling in India of disturbance in that region. But its importance from its possible reactions on the relations of the Trucial Chiefs with Ibn Saud is hardly less great.



Status of certain Groups of Islands in the Persian Gulf.

(*Communicated by India Office and revised to 27th August 1928.*)

The recent reassertion by the Persian Government of their claim to the islands of Tamb and Abu Musa, coupled with their refusal to recognise as independent the Sheikh of Ras-al-Khaima on the Trucial Coast, or the claim of His Majesty's Government under their treaty engagements to protect the Trucial Sheikhs,* and Mr. Parr's report** as to the extreme sensitiveness of Persia at the present time about her authority in the islands, suggest the desirability of a clear understanding in connection with the deliberations of the Persian Gulf Sub-Committee as to the status of the more important islands in the Gulf other than Tamb, Little Tamb, Abu Musa and Sirri, which are dealt with in the Memorandum on page 97. The present Note, accordingly, deals with the following groups of islands:—

(*a*) Warba, Bubiyan, Maskan, Failakah, Auhah, Kubbar, Qaru, Umm-el-Maradim, which lie off the coast of Koweit and the mouth of the Shatt-el-Arab.

(*b*) Kishm, Henjam, Ormuz, Laruk, Sheikh Shuaib, Haiderabi, Kais, Farur (and Little or Nabiyu Farur), which lie off the south Persian coast, and the position of which came under discussion before and during the war.

(*c*) The Bahrein Archipelago.

(*d*) Halul, Dalmah, Sir Beni Yas, Sir Abu Nair, Qran, Jinnah, Kharag, Khargu.

* Teh. tel. 239 to F.O., Aug. 22 1928.
** Teh. Desp. 384 to F.O., July 27 1928.

A.—Bubiyan, Failakah, Auhah, Kubbar, Qaru, Umm-el-Maradim.

These islands were before the war in Turkish possession. They were attributed to the administrative control of the Sheikh of Koweit in the (unratified) Anglo-Turkish Convention of 29th July 1913, and were occupied by the Sheikh on the outbreak of war with Turkey in November 1914. They were formally recognised by His Majesty's Government as forming part of His Excellency's dominions in April 1923 (see Koweit Memorandum, para. 35, on page 80).

No Persian claim to these islands can reasonably be preferred.

B.—Sheikh Shuaib, Kishm, Henjam, Ormuz, Laruk, Hinderabi, Kais, Farur, Nabiyu or Little Farur.

The status of Henjam is examined in greater detail in paras. 5 and 6 of the Memorandum on Henjam on p. 109. With the exception of Nabiyu or Little Farur, these islands appear to be indisputably Persian; and in 1914 His Majesty's Government made a formal offer to the Persian Government to lease or purchase all except Hinderabi, Kais, and Farur.† In 1918, when the renewal of this offer was under consideration, the addition of the three last-named islands to the lists to be communicated to Persia was approved.‡

† Teh. Desp. to F.O., Dec. 12 1914, P. 5088/14.
‡ F.O. tel. 132 to Teheran, Mar. 9 1918, P. 1028/18.

NABIYU FARUR.

The status of **Nabiyu** or Little **Farur** is not formally determined. The island, which is uninhabited, and lies about 10 miles south-west of the southern extremity of Farur Island, is circular in shape and about half a mile in diameter. The Persian Government were stated in 1906§ "as yet" to have paid no attention to it; the Government of India and the India Office in 1908 expressed the view|| that, on the analogy of Little Tamb, it should be regarded as depending from Farur, "which admittedly belonged to Persia," and the Foreign Office did not dissent from this view.

The question was again raised in 1924 in connection with a proposal to erect a light on the island. The Political Resident then suggested that the precedent of Little Tamb was not necessarily binding on His Majesty's Government, adding: "We have precise facts that Nabiyu Farur is a barren rock, useless, and not claimed by anyone, and that in 1875 the Farur Sudanis

§ Lor. I. 664.
|| Viceroy to S. of S. for I., Nov. 11 1908; I.O. to F.O., Dec. 2 1908, P. 2111.



were recognised as belonging to the Jowasim Tribe of Trucial Oman." No reference to the incident of 1875 could be traced by the India Office; but the Secretary of State for India agreed with the Government of India that it would be undesirable to start the erection of a lighthouse on the island without prior intimation to Persia, and the matter was not pursued.

I.O. to F.O., Mar. 28 1934, P. 889/34.

It would appear therefore that there is little question that the island must be regarded as Persian, though a slight element of doubt as to a Jowasimi claim exists.

C.—The Bahrein Archipelago.

The archipelago consists of the islands of Bahrein, Muharraq, Umm Na'assan, Sitrah, and Nabi Salih, and a number of lesser islets and rocks forming part of the same compact geographical group.

The archipelago is under the rule of the Sheikh of Bahrein, and the status of Bahrein governs the status of all the other islands composing it.

D.—Farsi, Arabi, Harqus; Halul, Dalmah, Shura-awah, Sir Beni Yas, Sir Abu Nair, Qran, Jinnah, Kharag, Khargu.

The status of these islands is important, not merely because of the claims which may be urged to them by the Trucial Chiefs, to whom His Majesty's Government are under treaty obligations, but because their control is in many cases of importance in connection with the policing of the pearl banks, for which responsibility has been assumed by His Majesty's Government, and because of the possible value of certain of them in connection with an air route along the north Arabian coast.

FARSI, ARABI AND HARQUS.

Farsi is an uninhabited island about a quarter mile across, in the middle of the Gulf, about halfway between Musallamiyah Bay in Hasa and the Tangistan district in south Persia. **Arabi** is 15 miles south of Farsi; and **Harqus**, "a mere sandbank," 30 miles west of it. Oil seepages were alleged in 1914 (Engler's "Petroleum") to exist in the sea near all three islands, and Arabi carries a deposit of guano.

Lor. II, 113, 332, 445.

The ownership of all three islands was stated in the Persian Gulf Gazetteer to be undetermined, Mr. Lorimer adding in the cases of Arabi and Harqus that the question had never arisen. The India Office in 1914 expressed the view,* which the Foreign Office did not contest, that His Majesty's Government should eventually claim the right to deal with all three islands (as with Halul); and beacons were at the same time erected on them with the concurrence of Admiralty and Foreign Office.† No steps were, however, in fact ever taken to regularise the status of the islands, which geographically would most easily have been assigned to Koweit.

* I.O. to F.O., Oct. 29 1914, P. 3946.

† Tel. from S. of S. for I. to Viceroy, Dec. 11 1914, P. 4966.

HALUL.

An island 1 mile in diameter, some 61 miles E.N.E. of Dohak in the Trucial Principality of El Katr, surrounded by pearl banks, and having in its neighbourhood, under the sea, an intermittent spring of bitumen.‡

‡ Lor. II, 641.

In 1906 there were rumours, which proved unfounded, of German designs to acquire the island from the Porte for use as a coaling station, for which purpose the Government of India stated that it was not unsuitable. Lorimer's Political Gazetteer (1906) described the status of the island as "indeterminate; the pearl divers and fishermen both of El Katr and of Trucial Oman are in the habit of resorting to it; and, so far as can be learnt, no exclusive or preferential rights are claimed by any of the classes who use it, or by any territorial Chief."§ In 1908 the India Office, after consultation with the Viceroy, suggested to the Foreign Office that it was preferable to take no action which might lead to discussion of the status of the island, as "any assertion of rights beyond the present customary usage . . . by Arabs from Bahrein, the Trucial Coast and El Katr, might lead to claims being raised by the El Katr Sheikhs to which the Turkish Government [suzerain of Katr till 1916, since when the Sheikh has been recognised as an independent Trucial Chief] might lend their support."||

§ Lor. II, 614.

|| I.O. to F.O., Dec. 2 1908, P. 2113.



55

In 1913 Sir Percy Cox, then Political Resident, reported the discovery of correspondence of 1869 from which it appeared that, one of the Shatt-al-Arab buoys having gone adrift and been thrown up on Halul Island, reference was made apparently as a matter of course to the Trucial Sheikh of Abu Dhabi as overlord of the island,* and in 1914 His Majesty's Government authorised† the erection of a beacon on Halul for political as distinct from navigational reasons, and, to quote the Resident, with a view to "enabling us to keep a footing there as a political precaution." (Cp. para. 10 of Memorandum on Lighting and Buoying on p. 140.)

As in the case of Farsi, Arabi and Harqus, the India Office in 1914 recommended that His Majesty's Government should eventually claim the right to deal with Halul,‡ but no steps were in fact taken for the regularisation of its status. This accordingly remains indeterminate, the available evidence appearing to point to the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi as the owner, or failing him one of the other Arab rulers of the Trucial Coast, including the Sheikh of El Katr. There is no history of a Persian claim. The bitumen spring makes the question one of some potential importance.

* Pol. Res. to G. of I., Feb. 23 1913, P. 1322/13.

† Tel. to Viceroy, Mar. 4 1914, P. [illegible]

‡ I.O. to F.O., Oct. 28 1914, P. 3948.

DALMAH.

An island 5 miles long and 2½ miles wide, off the coast of the Trucial Sheikhdom of Abu Dhabi, close to several pearl banks, and of importance in the pearling season. The Government of India and the India Office agreed in 1908 that the island was undoubtedly under the Trucial Sheikh of Abu Dhabi.§

§ I.O. to F.O., Dec. 2 1908, P. 2111.

SIR BENI YAS.

An island rather over 100 miles W. by S. of Abu Dhabi Town, 18 miles E.S.E. of Dalmah Island, and 4 or 5 miles north of the coast of Dhafrah; described by Lorimer as forming with the islands of Zirko, Arzanah, Daiyinah, Qarnain, Solali, and Das,|| part of the domains of the Trucial Sheikh of Abu Dhabi. All the islands in question are in the vicinity of pearl banks.

There is no history of a rival claim. The island is of importance as affording "an ideal aerodrome, good anchorage . . . a good cold weather . . . certainly the best harbour at present existing in the Gulf,"¶ and Sir Lionel Haworth has suggested that it should be purchased from the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi for about £3,000, or alternatively leased, in connection with an air route along the north Arab coast.**

|| Lor. ii, 177, 383, 402, 1454, 1851, 1981, 1948.

¶ Desp. 125 S. from Pol. Res. to G. of I., April 24 1927, paras. 26-28.

** Desp. 23 S. to G. of I., Feb. 13 1927, P. 1272.

SHURA-AWAR.

A very small island in the neighbourhood of two pearl banks, lying in the bay between Abu Dhabi and Qatar, about 34 miles N. by W. of Dalmah. Its political position is described by Lorimer as apparently "indeterminate, resembling that of Halul Island."††

†† Lor. ii, 1815.

SIR ABU NAIR.

An island, not permanently inhabited, 2¼ miles long by 2 miles broad, about 50 miles N. by W. of the Trucial Arab town of Abu Dhabi, and 65 miles west of Dibai; containing salt deposits, alleged to contain deposits of sulphur, and in the neighbourhood of pearl banks.‡‡

On the occasion of the Persian attempt on Tamb and Abu Musa in 1904, the Sheikh of Shargah represented to the Political Resident that "the British Government are aware of the fact that the islands of Tamb, Abu Musa, and Sir (meaning Sir Abu Nair)" belonged to him.§§ The salt in the island was stated in the Persian Gulf Gazetteer|||| to have been "removed by Persians, chiefly from Lingah and Kung, on payment of dues to the Sheikh of Shargah" until "some two years ago" (say 1904). The India Office in 1908 accepted Mr. Lorimer's view, as expressed in the Gazetteer, that the island belonged to the Sheikh of Shargah,¶¶ and in 1913, on the suggestion of Sir Percy Cox, the statement in the "Persian Gulf Pilot" that the island "is claimed by the Al Jowasim Chief" was replaced by the words "belongs to the principality of Shargah."***

‡‡ Lor. ii, 1292.

§§ Pol. Res. to G. of I., April 13 1904.

|||| Lor. ii, 1292.

¶¶ I.O. to F.O., Dec. 2 1908, 2111/08.

*** Letter from Pol. Res. to G. of I., Feb. 23 1913, P. 1322/13.

QRAN OR KRAN.

An island off the coast of Hasa, some 36 miles N.E. of Ras-al-Bidya,††† about 1⅓ miles long, by ⅓ mile wide, waterless, level, covered with brushwood,

††† Lor. ii, 1062.



a few feet above sea level, with anchorage in 8 fathoms (sand) about half a mile from the island, frequented by fishermen from Musallamiyah and Jinnah Islands in Hasa, from Hadd in Bahrein, and possibly from Kharag (Persian). Ownership described by Lorimer as apparently indeterminate.

Its occupation has been recommended by the Political Resident as a pis aller to Jinnah in connection with an air route along the north Arab coast.*

* Desp. to G. of I., Feb. 19 1927, para. 9.

JINNAH.

An island 1½ miles long, a mile off the coast of Hasa, formerly Turkish, and now in the dominions of Ibn Saud. Abundant fresh water. Examination with a view to lease in connection with a north Arabian coast air route recommended by Political Resident in 1927.†

† Desp. to G. of I., Feb. 19 1927.

KHARAG.

An important island 34 miles W.N.W. of Bushire, over 4 miles long and on an average 2 miles wide, in the vicinity of a number of pearl banks. Appears to be indisputably Persian,‡ and a Persian Customs official has for some years been stationed there. It was occupied by Indian forces from 1838–42, and again in 1856–7.‖

‡ Lor. II, 1019-21.

‖ Lor. I, 1985, 2076.

KHARGU.

Two and a half miles north of Kharag, is barren and uninhabited. No reference to its ownership is made by Lorimer.§

§ Lor. II, 1022.



(56)

HENJAM.

Position and Rights of His Majesty's Government in the Island of Henjam.

The Sheikh of Henjam and his Affairs.

(Communicated by India Office and revised to 26th September 1928.)

Introductory.

Henjam is an island 5½ miles long and about 3 miles broad, situated off the south coast of the island of Kishm, from which it is divided by a strait a mile wide and 6–12 fathoms deep in the fairway. It contains a valuable anchorage at Masheh Bay, while at the settlement of Ghail, some 3 miles from the village of Henjam, there is an almost inexhaustible supply of fresh water. The island in addition contains saltmines of some value. Its position off the Persian coast at a point where the Persian Gulf is so narrow that the Arabian coast is ordinarily visible gives it considerable strategic importance.

2. Since 1869 (with an interval between 1881 and 1904) a station of the Indo-European Telegraph Company has been maintained on Henjam with the concurrence of the Persian Government; since 1911, when the Admiralty coaling depôt was transferred to it from Basidu, the island has been employed by His Majesty's ships stationed in the Gulf as their principal base, and a canteen and playgrounds are maintained in the Telegraph Concession by the Naval authorities. The climate of Henjam is, however, extremely trying in the summer, and the view was expressed in 1903 that it would not be a suitable site for a defended naval establishment.*

3. The island, the only place of importance on which is the village of Henjam, an Arab settlement dependent principally on pearl fishing, is inhabited by Arabs belonging to the Beni Yas tribe of the Arabian coast. The Beni Yas are said to have migrated to it from the Arabian coast about a century ago,† with the permission of the Sultan of Muscat, at a time when Henjam was definitely claimed and administered by that State. They are reported consistently to have refused to acknowledge Persian sovereignty or to accept Persian nationality, and to have made it clear that they would rather leave Henjam than become Persian subjects. They have inter-married throughout with the Beni Yas of the Arabian coast; their commercial dealings and their pearling ventures are all connected with that tribe; their Sheikh is the father-in-law of the Trucial Sheikh of Dabai, and the ruling family of Dabai and their subjects claim to have 3½ lakhs of rupees sunk in the concerns of the Henjam branch of their tribe.

4. A Persian Customs agent has been maintained in the island since 1905, and a Customs post was established in the area of the Indo-European Telegraph Department's concession, with the knowledge and approval of His Majesty's Government, in 1927. There is also a Persian Post Office alongside the Customs House, the difficulties caused by the anti-British activities of the postmaster of which have come to notice on various occasions recently, and have formed the subject of representations at Teheran.‡

International Status of Henjam.

5. The international status of Henjam has formed the subject of considerable discussion in the past, claims being preferred to it by Muscat and by the Trucial Sheikh of Dabai (subject, however, to the overriding claim of Muscat§) as well as by Persia. The Persian claim is based on the assertion that Henjam is and always has been a Persian possession, dependent from Bunder Abbas, and that such authority as was exercised in it in the first half of the last century by Muscat was exercised by that State under its lease from Persia of Bunder Abbas and its dependencies. Muscat



claims, on the other hand, that Henjam has never been a Persian possession, and that no specific reference to it was at any stage made in connection with the lease from Persia of Bunder Abbas and its dependencies.

6. Careful examination of the available evidence suggests that the claims of Muscat are substantial.[*] But despite the representations in favour of Muscat of the then Political Resident, Persian sovereignty was formally recognised in 1868 by His Majesty's Government and the Government of India; in the year 1904 His Majesty's Government further informed the Persian Government that "there was no intention . . . to support any such claim [to sovereignty] on the part of the Sheikh of Dubai, or to repudiate the authority of the Persian Government over Henjam"; and their recognition of Persian suzerainty has been reiterated on various occasions since that date, and particularly in the last two years.[†] In the circumstances, while the Muscat claim has never been abandoned, it seems impracticable for His Majesty's Government, in view of their consistent recognition of Persian sovereignty over the last 60 years, to take any action at this stage to challenge the position of Persia.

The British Telegraph Concession at Henjam.

7. The basis of the position in Henjam of His Majesty's Government is the Telegraph Concession secured from the Persian Government in 1868. Prior to that date the occupation of Henjam (with the approval of the Imam of Muscat, under whose effective control the island then was) had been considered in 1820 in connection with the removal to the south Persian coast of the British military detachment stationed on the Arabian coast at Ras-al-Khaima; but, as in the case of Basidu (*cp.* Memorandum on p. 118, para. 6), an emphatic repudiation of the power of Muscat, "itself a dependency of Persia," to grant concessions in Henjam and Kishm, "which are dependencies of Bander Abbas," was received from Persia and the matter was not pursued.

8. There appear to have been no developments of importance until 1865. In that year the transfer to the island of the telegraph station maintained on Cape Musandim on the Arabian coast was proposed by the Indian Telegraph authorities. After considerable discussion as to the rival claims to suzerainty of Persia and Muscat, it was decided in 1868 that Persia was the only Power which could object to the establishment of the station on the island, and it was agreed that a formal request for permission for its erection should be made to the Persian Government by His Majesty's Minister in Teheran.

9. The necessary sanction was granted by the Shah on 29th March 1868, subject to a proviso that "the number of employees and the extent of the buildings should not at any time be allowed to exceed those explained in the Memorandum received from the British Legation." The exact scope of the concession, and the area within which it was to operate, having subsequently formed the subject of considerable controversy with Persia, it may be placed on record that the Memorandum in question stipulated for a staff of 15 Europeans, to include a Telegraph Superintendent and his assistant, an apothecary, and a storekeeper; and for a telegraph office containing instrument room, battery rooms, Superintendent's office, verandah, &c.; a dwelling house for the Superintendent and his assistant; a barrack for 10 or 12 clerks, a house for apothecary and medical stores; a large shed for telegraph stores and material; a house for the storekeeper, and a shed for inferior material and coal store for the telegraph steamer when cruising, together with sundry out-offices for cooking houses, native servants, stables, &c. The cable appears to have been landed at Henjam towards the end of December 1868 and a telegraph station to have been opened shortly after.

10. The telegraph station was maintained from 1868-9 to 1881, when its abandonment was approved. Proposals for the transfer to Henjam of the naval coal depôt at Basidu and the acquisition of the island from Persia in exchange for Basidu were considered in 1865-6, 1872 and 1880,



They were abandoned in 1866 and 1872 owing to the disputed sovereignty of the island, and were finally dropped in 1880 in view of the decision to close down the telegraph station. No formal notification of the abandonment of the station in 1881 appears to have been made to Persia.*

11. The possibilities afforded by Henjam were next brought to notice in 1901,† in connection with the discussions then engaging His Majesty's Government and the Government of India, on the question of naval bases, and of the consolidation of the British position in the Gulf. In 1903 the Government of India‡ recommended the reoccupation of the telegraph station, which, they pointed out, had never been formally resumed by Persia, and the linking through it of Bandar Abbas with the Persian Gulf telegraphs—a question of some strategical importance.

12. After further investigation of the rival claims of Basidu, the Government of India's proposal was approved by His Majesty's Government early in 1904. Considerable discussion took place on the question of the communication, if any, to be made on the subject to Persia. It was finally decided to inform Persia of the intention to re-establish the telegraph station, and to ask for permission to extend the cable to Bandar Abbas§; and, action on these lines having been taken, the site of the former concession was reoccupied in April 1904, in advance of the conclusion, in March 1905,|| of a formal agreement with Persia. It may be noted that the agreement, when concluded, provided for the establishment by Persia of a Persian telegraph office on the island.

13. In July 1904 an unfounded report of the removal by the British telegraph authorities of the Persian flag at Henjam led to a protest by Persia, in replying to which His Majesty's Minister explicitly stated that "His Majesty's Government has never denied the sovereignty of Persia over Henjam, as is shown by the fact that our occupation is derived by the concession granted to us by His Majesty the late Shah."¶

14. The re-establishment of the station roused Persian suspicions of the intentions of His Majesty's Government. Flagstaffs were erected, and in November 1904 a customs official was appointed to the island and a customs post established by him within the limits of the concession. A lengthy controversy took place as to the precise boundaries of the Telegraph Concession (Persia maintaining** that the Firman of 1868, referred to in para. 9 above, granted accommodation only and not land), in the course of which His Majesty's Government intimated that the fact of former occupation from 1869-81 was regarded by them as equivalent to a formal concession of the land then held. The dispute on this point, after an offer by His Majesty's Government to apply if necessary for a formal concession of the land on the previous understanding that the request would be favourably entertained, was finally dropped on the question of the precise area of the land which was to be considered as having been alienated by Persia. The Persian Government explained that their difficulty in coming to a settlement arose to some extent from a fear for a demand for corresponding concessions in the north from Russia.

15. The effect on the local Arabs of the reassertion of Persian authority, and the serious difficulties which have arisen since 1904 owing to the Arab attitude towards Persian claims to sovereignty, are dealt with separately in the Note on the Sheikh of Henjam and his affairs in paras. 25 to 34 below.

16. From 1911 the Naval authorities and the Telegraph Concession used Henjam as their chief base in the Gulf, and in 1912 the naval coaling station was removed to it from Basidu (in which, however, a nominal depôt was retained), depôts being built within the area of the telegraph station. With a short interval in 1915, it has been maintained since that date.†† A coaling pier was completed in 1921.‡‡ No communication appears to have been made to Persia regarding the establishment of the coal depôt, and it was agreed that, should the matter be raised by her, the depôt should be represented as having been established in connection with the suppression of the arms traffic.

Lr. from Pol. Res. to G. of I., June 29 1911, P. 1303/11. Précis, p. 27.
* G. of I. Desp. 98, to S. of S. for I., May 7 1903.
† G. of I. Desp. to S. of S. for I., May 7 1903.
‡ Desp. 36, May 7 1903.
§ Tel. from S. of S. for I. to Viceroy, Mar. 8 1904.
|| Précis, pp. 57, 66-8.
Tel. Desp. 120, July 9 1904, P. 3066.
¶ Desp. 68, July 2 1904.
P. 3246/05.
** Tel. encl. to F.O. 175, Dec. 15 1905, P. 2758/06.
Tel. from S. of S. to Viceroy, Jan. 9 1906.
Lr. from Pol. Res. to G. of I., June 29 1911, P. 1303/11.
†† Tel. from G. of I. to D.R.I.M., Aug. 31 1915, P. 4208.
‡‡ P. 406/21.
Tel. from S. of S. for I. to Viceroy, April 8 1912, P. 1124.



* F. 1806/11. Tel. Desp. to F.O., Dec. 12 1914. [illegible]

17. The question of negotiating with Persia an exchange of Basidu for Henjam was again examined in 1911,* but was not pursued, while in 1914 and again in 1918 the purchase or lease from Persia of Henjam and certain other islands in the Gulf was considered, a formal offer being made to Persia in respect of them in 1914, but without result.

1926–8: Reassertion of Persian Claims.

18. Up to 1926 naval stores "in transit" to His Majesty's ships and for use in the concession had been landed at Henjam without payment of customs dues and without reference to the Persian customs. A claim for payment of duty was for the first time made by Persia in May 1926; and in October of the same year His Majesty's Minister decided that customs, monopoly, and road tax must be admitted. The duties in question have apparently been levied since that date. No taxes are, however, levied on Government stores landed at Henjam for transhipment to naval vessels, the Persian Government having agreed in 1927 to the establishment of a bonded warehouse for such stores.†

† Tel. from Pol. Res. to G. of I., [illegible] 1927, [illegible]

19. In July 1926 enquiry by the Persian Government as to the rights of property of His Majesty's Government in Basidu and Henjam led to a re-examination of the position of His Majesty's Government in those stations. The Admiralty urged the desirability of retaining the Henjam concession and regularising the position in respect of it. Not only was the retention of the coal depôt essential, since three out of the four vessels employed in the Gulf were still coal-burning, but the station offered the only recreational facilities in the Gulf for men of the squadron. The Government of India, in expressing agreement with the views of the Admiralty, referred to the strategical importance of a coaling station at the mouth of the Gulf. An endeavour to conclude an arrangement with Persia on the basis of surrender of the British position in Basidu in return for consolidation of that in Henjam was in contemplation, but the Minister at Teheran having reported that in the present state of Persian opinion "it would be impossible to obtain perpetual lease of Henjam in return for Basidu‡"; and it having proved possible to avoid further discussion of the general question with Persia, the matter dropped for the time being.

20. During 1927 there arose difficulty with Persia (to which suspicions of the responsibility of His Majesty's Government for the activities of the Sheikh of Henjam—see para. 28 below—contributed) as the result of the erection within the limits of the concession of a house for the Persian postmaster without prior reference to His Majesty's Government, and again in connection with the expulsion of a Persian nakhuda who had without permission built a hut within the concession. An amicable settlement of both incidents were secured, and both the Minister and the Political Resident made it clear to the Belgian customs officials that His Majesty's Government had no claim to or designs on the island, and wanted no more than the control of the concession for sanitary reasons. The customs officials reacted favourably to a suggestion that Basidu might be surrendered in return for consolidation of the position at Henjam, but the matter was not pursued. A site for a new Customs House within the limits of the British concession was agreed with the British authorities.

21. On the occasion of the expulsion of the Sheikh of Henjam in May 1928, not only was the Sheikh refused permission to take refuge in the British concession, but Persian troops were allowed to occupy the concession, a guarantee being given by their commander that British lives and interests would be respected. Persian sovereignty even within the limits of the concession was thus recognised in a practical manner.

22. In September 1928 the Admiralty reported that a number of Persian troops had arrived in Henjam, 15 of whom had crossed into the British concession, and the Chargé d'Affaires at Teheran was instructed that semi-official action for their removal should be taken on the ground of the inconvenience caused by them, and of the fact that while Persia's right to send troops into the concession in case of need was not disputed, no real necessity existed in the present instance.



59

23. The incidents at Tamb and Basidu in the summer of 1928 necessitated consideration of the action to be taken at Henjam in the event of Persian aggression under the Telegraph Concession there; and in September 1928 the Admiralty suggested that the Senior Naval Officer should be authorised to take action on the lines approved in the case of Basidu (compare page 121, para. 25). The Foreign Office, however, expressed the view that, having regard to the weakness of the British position at Henjam, and to the desirability of regularising that position, in agreement with Persia, and of securing the maintenance of the use of the concession as a naval depôt and recreation ground, for which Persian permission had never been obtained, the Senior Naval Officer should be instructed that conflict with the Persian authorities in the island, military or civil, should be avoided in all circumstances save in a grave emergency when British lives and property are in danger, and that even then force should be used only in the last resort.

Adm. to F.O., Sept. 15 1928. F.O. to Adm., Sept. 29 1928 P. [illegible]/28.

Henjam Wireless Station.

24. The history of the wireless station established at Henjam in 1916, the present importance of that station, and the threat to its continued maintenance constituted by the Persian prohibition of the import of spare parts, is dealt with in the Memorandum on Wireless in the Gulf on page 125.

Relations between the Sheikh of Henjam and Persia: 1904–28.

25. The Arab Sheikh of Henjam, now over 80 years of age, is the direct descendant of the Arab leader to whom permission to occupy Henjam was granted by the Sultan of Muscat about 1826. He is the hereditary ruler of the Arabs of the Beni Yas tribe who inhabit the island; he claims, as do his people, never to have acquiesced in Persian claims to sovereignty over Henjam or to have acquired Persian nationality, and so recently as 1927 he informed the Officer Commanding H.M.S. *Lupin* that he regarded action in Henjam by the Persian customs authorities against his property as a violation "of his rights, as he considered himself a subject of the Sultan of Muscat."* The general attitude of the Sheikh and his subjects on the question of Persian nationality, and their close relations with the Trucial Sheikhdoms of the Arab coast, and particularly with Dubai, are described in para. 3 above.

* Report from S.N.O., Adm. to I.O., Aug. [illegible] 1927, P. [illegible].

26. His Majesty's Government, on the other hand, have, as already stated, consistently held that the island of Henjam belongs to Persia, and that the claims of the Sultan of Muscat, on which the Sheikh of Henjam to some extent bases his attitude, cannot be entertained.

27. The gradual assertion of Persian authority in the island since the establishment on it of a customs port in 1904 (see para. 14 above) has led during the last 25 years to considerable friction between the local Persian officials and the Arab inhabitants. Tension was particularly marked between 1904 and 1907,† during which period an appeal to the Sultan of Muscat‡ by the Henjam Arabs led to a visit to the island by His Highness in 1905, and a formal protest by him to His Majesty's Government against Persian action. A proposal to transfer the Arabs to Basidu was rejected by His Majesty's Government in 1906 on political grounds. Difficulty again arose in 1914.§

A serious incident would appear to a large extent to have been avoided in the past owing to the knowledge of the Sheikh that His Majesty's Government recognise Persian sovereignty, and the fact that the Persian customs post lies within the boundary of the British concession.

† F.O. tel. to Teh., 34, Feb. 20, 1906.
‡ Tel. from Pol. Res. to G. of I., Dec. 27 1905, P. 300/06. Tel. from Pol. Res. to G. of I., Dec. 7 1906, P. 1025/06.
§ Lr. from Pol. Res. to G. of I., May 20 1914, P. 2407/14.

28. Ill-feeling of long standing came to a head, however, in April 1927, when, consequent on the seizure by the Persian customs officials of a dhow belonging to the Sheikh of Henjam *en route* to Khassab on the Arabian coast and carrying Rs. 3,000 in cash, the customs post, though within the British concession, was attacked and looted by the Sheikh and his followers, the Customs Mudir being killed, the local Persian Postmaster wounded, and more serious disturbances being prevented only by the landing of a



S.N.O. to Pol. Res. April 19 1927, P. [illegible]

British naval party, the valuable services rendered by which were gratefully acknowledged subsequently by the Governor of the Gulf Ports.

29. The Sheikh was rebuked by the Senior Naval Officer for his encroachment on the territory of the concession, which was, he alleged, the result of misunderstanding; and was reminded that he had been warned in June 1926 that should Persia take punitive action against him he need not look for protection to His Majesty's Government.

30. The Customs Mudir was replaced towards the end of 1927, but punitive action by Persia was delayed till the spring of 1928. In May of that year an armed Persian force landed on the island and expelled the Sheikh, who fled with his subjects to the Trucial Coast, leaving behind certain of the women of the tribe. He had been warned that if he sought refuge in the British Concession he would be surrendered, and the Persian troops on arrival were permitted to enter and camp in the concession on the ground that it was Persian territory.

Lr. from Pol. Res. to G. of I., June 21 1928, P. [illegible]
Tel. from Pol. Res. to G. of I., 722, June 13, P. [illegible]

31. The expulsion of the Sheikh, and in particular the fact that he had been refused shelter in the British Concession, produced a serious situation on the Arab coast (see paras 18 and 19 of the Memorandum on the Trucial Chiefs on p. 90). The Political Resident, apprehensive of the effect on Trucial feeling of the adoption of a detached attitude by His Majesty's Government, suggested that His Majesty's Government might act as intermediaries, with a view to ascertaining whether Persia would be prepared to accept any terms on which the Sheikh could return on acknowledging Persian sovereignty and paying blood money. His Majesty's Government, in agreement with the Government of India and the Chargé d'Affaires at Teheran, decided, however, that intervention on behalf of the Sheikh would be likely to do more harm than good; that a local settlement was clearly the right solution, and that if any influence was exercised with Persia it should be both unobtrusive and local.

Tel. from Viceroy, June 19, P. [illegible]
I.O. to F.O., June [illegible], P. 3878.
F.O. to Teh., 152, June 26, P. [illegible]

32. The question of action on behalf of the Sheikh, in view of the situation on the Trucial Coast, where feeling, further aggravated by the Tamb incident, continued to run high, formed the subject of considerable discussion during August and September 1928. In September 1928 the Sheikh of Dubai reported, however, that a Persian Envoy from Henjam had arrived inviting the Sheikh and all his people, except the actual murderers of the Mudir, to return; and the Senior Naval Officer, aware of the reluctance of His Majesty's Government to intervene, advised that the Sheikh of Henjam must decide for himself. On 20th September the Political Resident reported that the Sheikh, with his men, had returned to Henjam, where he was understood to be awaiting the arrival of Persian officials to effect a settlement.*

* Pol. Res. to G. of I., T. [illegible], Sept. 20, P. 5125.

33. Matters rest at this point. The Government of India had previously suggested that the Trucial situation now made it desirable to inform the Dubai Arabs that while His Majesty's Government could not admit "non-amenability of Sheikh of Henjam, as a resident on soil recognised by us as Persian, to Persian authority in respect of his Henjam holding, we are prepared to represent views of Sheikh of Dubai and Beni Yas tribe . . . to Persian Government and use our good offices on behalf [of the Sheikh of Henjam] provided he is prepared to make full restitution for the murder of Customs Mudir. Matter might then be dealt with in autumn negotiations on basis of full acknowledgment of Persian sovereignty over Henjam. Issue of nationality should be avoided if possible, but, if it is to be raised, capital could be made . . . of status of (? Persians) resident on the Arab coast and in Iraq, and of Persian nationality law with its recognition of *jus sanguinis*."

Tel. from Viceroy to S. of S. for I., 1877 S., Sept. 16, P. [illegible]

34. The Government of India have been asked whether their views are affected by the return of the Sheikh to Henjam. The Chargé d'Affaires, Teheran, who had sounded the Persian Government as to the return of the Sheikh, has meanwhile expressed the view that failing a specific undertaking by Persia that he "be permitted to return in full liberty, he runs a certain risk, and we cannot accept responsibility for what may happen."

Tel. from S. of S. for I. to Viceroy, [illegible], Sept. 20, P. 5125/28.
Teh. tel. to F.O., 278, Sept. 21, P. 5190/28.



59

Summary.

35. The island of Henjam has been recognised by His Majesty's Government on several occasions as a Persian possession in terms such as to preclude a challenge to the Persian claim based on support of the rival claims of Muscat. The position in the island of His Majesty's Government depends solely, in law, on the concession granted for a telegraph station in 1868. That concession in terms permitted only the erection and maintenance of certain specified buildings, and the retention of a specified staff, for telegraph purposes. The wireless station subsequently erected, the naval coal depôt, the naval canteen and recreation grounds, all therefore represent an encroachment by His Majesty's Government for which legal justification cannot be pleaded.

36. The position of His Majesty's Government in the island is further complicated by the fact that the Arab inhabitants, who claim to be Trucial subjects, and who dispute Persian sovereignty, tend to look to us for protection against Persia. The reactions on British interests on the Trucial Coast of the attitude towards them of His Majesty's Government make it extremely desirable to take any action reasonably possible in their interests. Any such action, at the same time, is viewed with deep suspicion by Persia, and represents from the Persian standpoint an additional argument for terminating the British connection with the island.

37. The importance of maintaining that connection is, however, considerable. The strategic value of control of an island which commands the mouth of the Gulf, which has a good water supply and a good anchorage, needs no emphasis. The maintenance of the coaling depôt at present situated on it is desirable so long as the Persian Gulf Squadron contains coal burning units; while the recreational facilities at present afforded to that squadron at Henjam are not available elsewhere in the Gulf. As will be seen from the Memorandum on Wireless on pages 125–127, the island is of substantial importance in connection with wireless arrangements in the Gulf, while it might conceivably be of importance in certain circumstances in connection with the air route.

38. The omens are not favourable to the conclusion with Persia of an arrangement on lines satisfactory to His Majesty's Government, who have little to offer in exchange. It seems likely, as matters stand, that an offer to surrender the position at present occupied by His Majesty's Government in Basidu as the price of regularisation of the position in Henjam will prove less attractive to Persia than had at one time been hoped. It may, however, prove possible as part of the general settlement to secure the retention of the Telegraph concession, contracted to the essential needs of His Majesty's Government, on a long lease from Persia, on the basis of recognition, as at present, of full Persian sovereignty, and the importance of obtaining this may be held to justify the making of concessions in return to Persia which would in other circumstances have been disproportionate. Should it unfortunately prove impossible to arrive at an understanding with Persia, the arguments for consideration of the practicability of establishing a station on the Musandim Peninsula will be very appreciably strengthened.

39. The importance of the Sheikh of Henjam and his affairs derives from his connection with the Trucial Coast rather than with Henjam. It is to be hoped that the matter may have adjusted itself before negotiations with Persia are resumed. Should it not have done so, the balance of advantage appears, on a broad view, to lie with representations on his behalf to Persia by His Majesty's Government in the capacity of the disinterested friend of both parties, on the general lines set out in para. 33 above, coupled with the exercise of such pressure as is possible on the Sheikh and his subjects to recognise the *status quo* in Henjam.

Points referred to the Persian Gulf Sub-Committee.

40. The following points have been referred to in connection with the deliberations of the Persian Gulf Sub-Committee:—

(*a*) Position of His Majesty's Government in Basidu, Kishm and **Henjam** (P.G. 6 2 (*a*) 5).



(b) Whether the existing coaling depôts on Kishm [Basidu] and Henjam can without disadvantage be moved to Bahrein? (Conclusions of 1st meeting of Sub-Committee.)

Views expressed by the Government of India.

Tel. from Viceroy, [illegible] S., Aug. 22 1928, P. [illegible]/28.

41. The Government of India, who recognise that His Majesty's Government have no rights of ownership in Henjam, consider that "the naval advantages offered by Henjam with its deep anchorage render regularisation of our position desirable, and we still feel that we should seek to receive this in exchange for our former rights in Basidu, a solution as old as our original occupation in 1868 [cp. para. 10, *supra*]. Not that we anticipate possibility of acquiring a lease in perpetuity. The time appears to have passed for any such veiled form of transfer of sovereignty. Long lease or concession seems all that we can now hope for. We should be prepared to contract area to our essential needs."

Tel. from Viceroy, July [illegible] 1928 [illegible]

Lr. from Pol. Res. in G. of [illegible] S., July [illegible] 1928, P. [illegible]

42. On the question of the practicability of moving the coaling station from Henjam to Bahrein, the Government of India, while they remark that it is primarily a matter for the Admiralty, consider that *primâ facie* the move is practicable. The Political Resident, who refers to the fact that the Henjam anchorage "is absolutely indefensible from guns placed on Kishm Island," has suggested on this point that His Majesty's Government should be prepared to consider moving elsewhere, but that "if the Persians attempt to make us move, then we must demand sufficient time to prepare some other place, and must avoid any idea of being turned out in an undignified manner."



Position and Rights of His Majesty's Government in Basidu.

(Communicated by India Office and revised to 1st October 1928.)

Introductory.

1. Basidu is situated on the westernmost point of the island of Kishm, which is separated from the south Persian coast, to which it runs parallel, by Clarence Strait. It lies about 25 miles E. by N. of Lingah town on that coast. It has a reasonably good anchorage for vessels of moderate draught, about a quarter of a mile from the shore. The place is one of the healthiest near the entrance to the Gulf; while the island of Kishm, on which it is situated, was described in 1902 by Rear-Admiral Bosanquet as "in my opinion the most important strategical position in the Persian Gulf from a naval point of view . . ." For landing purposes there was stated in 1906 to be a jetty extending to low-water mark. There is a cemetery containing Indian Navy graves, which is maintained in good order and the upkeep of which is a point which will call for consideration should the concession revert to Persia.

Extent of the British Concession.

2. The extent of the British concession in Basidu was the subject of investigation in 1901. Difficulty was experienced in defining its limits, but the Government of India, after examination of the reports of the Political Resident and the available records, expressed the view that "whatever may have been the original limits of the tract granted to the British Government in 1820, as to which there appears to be no information readily available, they are debarred from asserting a claim over Old Bassidore [a village in close proximity to the old Portuguese fort which once existed upon the north-west extremity of the island of Kishm, and which, with the village of Bandar Singau, situated also in close proximity to the Portuguese fort, was formerly regarded as within the limits of the British station] by the prescription of many years. The site of the abandoned settlement at Singow may, however, be regarded as included within the limits of the British Station."

Status of Basidu.

3. The British concession in Kishm was obtained in 1820 by a written grant from the Imam of Muscat, in whose effective control of the island was then vested. The international and legal position of that concession turns on whether this grant was made by the Imam as sovereign of Kishm, and so of Basidu, or as tenant of Kishm from Persia.

4. From the records in the possession of the Government of India it would appear that from the middle of the 18th century until about 1800 Kishm was farmed by Arab tribes from the Persian sovereign, to whom they paid tribute; that at the beginning of the last century the islands and Bander Abbas came under the control of the Imam of Muscat, who, however, continued to pay rent to Persia in respect of them; that the officers of the Imam were, however, reported in 1821 to have stated that neither Kishm, Ormuz nor Larak were specified on the receipts annually granted by the Persian Government for the stipulated sum paid; and that the Muscat Government claimed at the same period that the islands in question belonged exclusively to them.

5. In 1799–1801 endeavours were made by His Majesty's Government to secure a lease of the island of Kishm from Persia, whose sovereignty was not apparently at the time regarded as doubtful. The active British association with the island, which, as stated above, dates from 1820, originated in the transfer to it in that year of the British military detachment previously stationed at Ras-al-Khaima. The British settlement on Kishm took place with the consent of the Imam of Muscat, who, in his letter on the subject to the Government of Bombay, remarked of Kishm that "The island in question and all other territories appertaining to me and subject to my authority appertain also to the Honourable Company, and I do not



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reckon those dominions as appertaining to me but as appertaining to the Honourable Company." The Imam simultaneously instructed the Sheikh of Kishm to give every assistance in the embarkation and conveyance of the troops. Various places were occupied in the island for the purpose in question, before a decision was finally taken in favour of Basidu in 1822.

6. An immediate protest in strong terms was received from the Persian Government against the British occupation of Kishm, and a reference to the lease granted by the Imam was met by a statement that Muscat was itself a dependency of Persia, and *a fortiori* Kishm and Henjam, which depended from Bunder Abbas.* Sooner than risk a rupture of friendly relations with Persia, it was decided to remove the British detachment from the town of Kishm. This was done in February 1822, but the Government of Bombay, in their letter repudiating the unauthorised agreement which had been entered into by Captain Bruce with the Prince Governor of Fars, which had *inter alia* recognised Persian sovereignty in Kishm, made it clear to the Persian Government that their action was without prejudice to the decision on the question of the respective rights in the island of the Imam of Muscat, and of Persia, and that the island would be restored by His Majesty's Government to the Imam, from whom they had leased it. As, however, no equally convenient naval station could be found in the Gulf, Basidu was again occupied in 1823, from which year until 1879 it remained the head-quarters of the naval squadron in the Gulf. No protest appears at the time to have been made by Persia against its re-occupation, since the date of which the British flag has flown in the concession.

7. In 1853 the Persian Government expelled the Muscat representative from Bunder Abbas and its dependencies (including apparently Kishm), and the agreement finally reached between Persia and Muscat in 1856 involved not only the payment of an increased rent to Persia by the Sultan of Muscat, but the recognition as Persian territory "of the two islands of Ormuz and Kishm, which had been dependencies of Oman."

8. During the Anglo-Persian War of 1855 Basidu was constantly used as a British depôt, but neither in 1853, 1856, 1864 (when the British occupation was confirmed under Article 6 of the Telegraph Agreement with Sultan Thoweynee of Muscat,† then lessee of the island from Persia), on the renewal of the Persian lease to Muscat in 1868, or on the forcible termination of that lease in the same year by Persia, was any exception taken by Persia to the British occupation.

9. The legal position of Basidu, which had been raised in 1863 by a claim from the Persian authorities, which would appear to have been rejected, for the surrender of a slave who had taken refuge in the concession, was again raised by a similar demand in the spring of 1868, and by a murder committed in the same year in the Naval Station.

10. The question was exhaustively considered by the Government of India, who as a result, on 8th September 1868, informed the Government of Bombay that in their opinion "**the station in question cannot properly be considered as British territory**. It is perfectly true that we have occupied Basidu either as a naval or coaling station for half a century. But the island has always been treated by us as a dependency of Bunder Abbas; and Bunder Abbas and its dependencies, including the island of Kishm, and consequently Basidu, have been leased to the Sultan of Muscat by the Shah of Persia under circumstances with which the Government of Bombay is perfectly familiar. . . . . It follows in such circumstances . . . . as the British Government holds possession of the town of Basidu by permission of the Sultan of Muscat, while that potentate derives his lease of Kishm, which includes Basidu, from the Shah of Persia . . . that Kishm must still be considered as Persian territory. There may be some obscurity as to the exact nature of our derivative title to the town of Basidu, and it may have been thought that our rights over the town existed by continued usage, or that we had obtained a prescriptive title; but, in **looking closely into the question, it becomes evident that our rights are subordinate to those of Muscat, which again are, admittedly, entirely subordinate to those of Persia, and have**



(61)

been always so treated up to this very hour." The Government of India, in adding that arrangements should be made to establish a local jurisdiction for petty criminal cases, remarked, **"The official holding the trial at Basidu would, in the eye of the law, be merely using the delegated authority of Persia and Muscat."**

11. The opinion as to the status of Basidu expressed in 1868 by the Government of India, and quoted in the preceding paragraph, has since held the field, and was maintained by them in 1875 in connection with the proposed Persian Coast and Islands Order in Council.*

12. In 1878 the Political Resident in the Gulf urged that the grant of 1820 by the Sultan of Muscat and its renewal by his successor in 1864, taken with "such prescriptive right as an undistributed possession of nearly 60 years may be held to confer, constitute our title to possession . . . I think it might fairly be urged that the Persian Government have been fully aware all these years of our assumption of the prerogatives of possession at Basidu and have by silence acquiesced."

1868—1926.

13. The surrender to Persia of the British concession at Basidu, in return for a corresponding concession at Henjam, and the transfer of the naval station in the Gulf to the latter island, was considered in 1866–8, but was not pursued. In 1878 the infantry detachment which had been maintained in the concession for the protection of the coal depôt was reduced from a company to a havildar guard, which was itself withdrawn in 1883. No detachment has since then been stationed at Basidu. In the same year the subordinate non-European staff were withdrawn, and the station placed in charge of a coal agent under the ultimate control of the Bushire Residency. Some concern was caused in 1899 by rumours of designs on Kishm by Russia, which, however, proved unfounded, and in 1901 the Government of India instructed† the Political Resident that "no official of the Persian Government can be permitted to reside in any part of the station at Basidu without the express consent of the British Government."

14. The question of reasserting British claims at Basidu in connection with the extension of British influence in the Gulf was considered, and a decision in favour of action to this end taken, by an inter-Departmental conference in 1902, but, probably consequent on the decision of His Majesty's Government in 1903–4 that Henjam offered greater advantages as a site for a telegraph station, no action appears to have resulted. A further recommendation as to the consolidation of the British position at the entrance to the Persian Gulf, including Kishm, was made at an inter-Departmental conference in connection with the Baghdad Railway in 1907, but again apparently without result.

15. In 1905 a request by the Moin-ut-Tujjar for permission to store red ochre in the British concession was refused, and in the same year the coal agent was instructed by the Resident to warn a Persian Customs officer who had interfered in the territory of the concession that "he has no business in British territory, and if he persists he should not be allowed to come within British territory."

16. No fresh consignment of coal was landed after 1911; the coaling station was unobtrusively transferred to Henjam in 1913; a proposal to abandon the concession, on grounds of economy, was dropped, apparently for political reasons, in 1923.** Since 1913 the concession has been maintained on political grounds only, its cost from the 1st April 1927 having fallen on Indian political funds.§ A nominal coal depôt and the coal agent are, however, maintained to this day, the British flag is constantly flown,‖ and the circuit house is kept up.¶

1926-8.—Reassertion of Persian Claims.

17. In 1926 the Chargé d'Affaires at Teheran reported that unofficial enquiry had been made by the Persian Government as to the rights of



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property possessed by His Majesty's Government in the coaling stations at Basidu and Henjam,[**] and the status of the concession and the arguments for its retention underwent further investigation by the Home Departments concerned and by the Government of India.

[** Tel. Desp. 44, July 8 1926, P. [illegible]]

18. The Admiralty expressed the view that the coaling stations were still required,* while, from a different standpoint, the Foreign Office, in connection with a complaint received about this time from Persia of the refusal of the British Agent at Basidu to pay customs dues, remarked that in view of the effect on the status of Henjam of admitting the Persian claim to Basidu, "it would be dangerous to allow doubt to be cast on the validity of the British rights to Basidu, which rest on undisturbed occupation over a long period."† The report of the Government of India reaffirmed the view expressed by their predecessors in 1868 (para. 11 above) as to the status of Basidu, and added that the station was maintained solely for political reasons and as a bargaining counter in negotiations for the recognition of the British position in Henjam or for some other consideration.‡ They regarded it as essential that neither Basidu, after relinquishment, nor any other fuelling station in the Gulf should be leased by Persia to any other Power.

[* Adm. to F.O., Oct. [illegible], P. [illegible]]
[† F.O. to I.O., Nov. [illegible], P. [illegible]]
[‡ G. of I. to I.O., Jan. [illegible], P. [illegible]]

19. An amicable settlement of the Persian complaint referred to in para. 18 was reached§ and it proved possible to avoid any formal discussion of the general question with Persia.

[§ F.O. to I.O., Jan. [illegible], P. [illegible]]

20. The Air Ministry, having in July 1927‖ raised the question of establishing a seaplane base at Basidu, were referred by the Foreign Office to the opinion expressed by the Government of India, and informed that Basidu was retained "mainly as a possible asset in negotiations with the Persian Government;" that the British position in it was extremely weak, and that there would be the strongest political objection to their proposal.¶

[‖ A.M. to F.O., July [illegible] 1927, P. [illegible]]
[¶ F.O. to A.M., Aug. [illegible] 1927, P. [illegible]]

21. The possibility of an arrangement with Persia in respect of Henjam on the basis of surrender of Basidu was touched on in unofficial discussion between Sir L. Haworth and the Belgian Director-General of Customs in September 1927, and was well received; but the matter was not pursued.

[Tel. Desp. [illegible], Sept. [illegible] 1927, P. [illegible]]

INCIDENT OF AUGUST—SEPTEMBER 1928.

22. There were no further developments till August 1928, when the Senior Naval Officer in the Gulf reported that the Persian Customs official in Persian Basidu, who had previously told the British caretaker that Persian troops would occupy British Basidu in a few weeks, claimed the right, under instructions from Bundar Abbas, to collect taxes in British Basidu, in which, he said, the British flag had no more significance than a consular flag.

[Senior Naval Officer to Adm., [illegible], Aug. 12 1928, P. [illegible]]

23. The Political Resident requested the Senior Naval Officer to keep a ship off Basidu, and, should Persia attempt to occupy the concession, state that this could not be permitted without the orders of His Majesty's Government. The Government of India, who were seriously disturbed by the Persian threat, which was closely followed by an attempt by the Persian Customs Mudir, which was prevented by the Captain of H.M.S. Lupin, to arrest a man within the concession, urged that His Majesty's Government should either—

(a) warn Persia that any molestation of British Basidu would be regarded as an unfriendly act; or

(b) send a small landing party to remain in Basidu until the situation cleared.

24. The Foreign Office saw objection to the first alternative, which they thought likely to provoke a definite challenge by Persia, as did the Chargé d'Affaires, Teheran. As regards the second, they were not prepared to take any action which might lead to an incident at Basidu, and so could not agree to the landing of a party save with orders to withdraw under protest if challenged. To action on these lines the Admiralty, with whom the India Office agreed, saw strong objection. The India Office suggested in the circumstances reversion to action on the lines taken by Sir L. Haworth as described in para. 23 above.



25. The situation was changed by information that the Persian Director of Customs at Bandar Abbas, who (he alleged on orders from Tehran) refused to recognise the British flag in Basidu, was intending to proceed thither with a gunboat on 11th September to make an arrest. The Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran was immediately instructed to make representations to the Central Customs authorities, and, if necessary, to warn the Persian Government that any molestation of British Basidu, "which has been British station for 100 years, would be a complete negation of Minister of Court's promise to Sir R. Clive." The Senior Naval Officer was simultaneously instructed that, as the landing of armed Persians in Basidu would be an infringement of the agreement entered into with the Persian Government, it should, as a last resort, be resisted by force, and that, while conflict with the Persians was to be avoided if possible, protection was to be afforded to British subjects at Basidu, and the British flag was not to be hauled down. The Senior Naval Officer was instructed, however, that, if the man required by the Persians was not a British subject, and the reason for his arrest in British Basidu appeared sufficient, he should himself take steps to arrest him and hand him over to the Persians.

26. It transpired that the individual whom the Persian Government desired to arrest was the British caretaker, Hussein (whose nationality, it may be remarked, is not clear). The naval precautions taken, coupled with the representations made at Tehran, secured, however, the desired result. The Customs official arrived at Basidu on the 19th September, and informed the Commanding Officer of the *Cyclamen* that he had orders that since the agreement with Persia of 10th May 1928 (i.e. the conclusion of the first stage of the general negotiations, in the course of which, however, no reference was made to Basidu), Basidu had ceased to be British. The Commanding Officer replied that the status of British Basidu was to be considered in the autumn, and that till then no Persian armed forces would be permitted to enter the area. The Customs official appears to have accepted the situation, and agreed that there should be no attempt at Customs interference, landing of troops or making of arrests. The Chargé d'Affaires at Tehran was about the same time informed by the Administrator-General of Customs that the Belgian Director had issued formal instructions to subordinate posts that they were to avoid sending armed vessels with armed landing parties to any of the islands, while the Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs, who expressed entire ignorance of the matter, agreed that "nothing will be done in regard to islands in Gulf to change *status quo* pending result of Customs conversations this autumn." There have been no subsequent developments; but the naval precautions taken by His Majesty's ships at Basidu are being maintained.

Summary.

27. The legal position in regard to Basidu is concisely set out in para. 10 above. The station cannot be regarded as British territory, and an absolute claim to the concession, in the face of a desire on the part of Persia to resume it, cannot be maintained by His Majesty's Government. On the other hand, His Majesty's Government have occupied the concession without protest for over a century (1822-1928), and, while they cannot be held by mere occupation to have acquired sovereign rights, undisturbed and unquestioned possession for so long a period would ordinarily be regarded as giving a very strong prescriptive right to continue occupancy on the terms on which the occupation had hitherto proceeded.

28. The station at Basidu has for the last few years been retained to a small extent because of its possible value to the Admiralty for coaling purposes, but primarily for political reasons, and with the object of using it as a pawn in negotiations with Persia, whether of a general character, or immediately directed to the consolidation of the position in Henjam of His Majesty's Government. The abrupt revival of the Persian claim makes it unlikely, however, that this counter will prove as valuable to His Majesty's Government for bargaining purposes as was at one time hoped.



Points referred to the Persian Gulf Sub-Committee.

29. Reference has been made to the following points in connection with the deliberations of the Sub-Committee:—

(*a*) The position of His Majesty's Government in Basidu and Kishm (P.G. 6, 2 (a) 5).

(*b*) Whether the coaling depôts in Kishm [*i.e.* Basidu] and Henjam can without disadvantage be moved to Bahrein (conclusions of first meeting of Sub-Committee).

Views of the Government of India.

Tel. from Viceroy, Aug. [illegible], P. [illegible].

30. The Government of India consider that as the rights in Basidu of His Majesty's Government derive from the Imam of Muscat in his capacity as tenant under Persia, their derivation can hardly be claimed by itself to substantiate British ownership. But the unchallenged occupation of Basidu has lasted over a century, and while materially the station is now of little or no use, politically "it is obviously a valuable counter, for possession unchallenged for a whole century is not easily shaken." Whatever its future, however, "we shall have to stipulate that our Indian Navy cemetery and British graves there are properly preserved."

Tel. from Viceroy, July [illegible], P.G. [illegible].

To the moving of the coal depôt (which, as explained in para. 16, has had a nominal existence only since 1912) they see no *prima facie* objection.



Question of British Consular Representation in El Hasa and Qatif.

(*Communicated by India Office and revised to 24th September 1928.*)

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1. The question is one which originally arose in 1904, when the Government of India, consequent on representations made during Lord Curzon's visit to the Gulf in 1903 by the British Indian merchants of Bahrein for the appointment of a British representative to protect their interests at Qatif against the vexatious action of the local Turkish Customs officials, recommended that the Political Agent at Bahrein should be appointed Vice-Consul for El Hasa, and that a native Consular Agent should be stationed at Qatif.

G. of I. Desp. of March 31 1904.

2. His Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople expressed himself as opposed to the proposal on the ground of the interpretation which the Turkish Government might place on it,* and, a satisfactory reply having been received to the representations addressed by His Majesty's Government to the Sublime Porte in regard to the grievances of the Indian traders, out of which the question arose, the matter dropped for the time being.

** S. of S. for I. to G. of I., Aug. 5 1904.*

S. of S. for I. to G. of I., Dec. [illegible] 1904.

3. There appear to have been no further developments until the beginning of 1914, when, consequent on the occupation of Hasa by Ibn Saud, the question of posting a native agent without further delay to Qatif was raised by the Government of India, who suggested that the matter was one in which advantage might be taken of the friendly attitude of Ibn Saud. The Viceroy added that the posting of an agent "will not only secure us desired foothold on this coast, but will enable us to render our good offices to Turkish Government in dealing with Ibn Saud, should they require them . . . and this might *ex post facto* be explained to Turkish Government." It was decided, however, in view of the general Turkish attitude, that the proposal was one which it would be useless to put before the Sublime Porte, since, however innocent might be the intentions of His Majesty's Government in appointing a British Agent to Qatif, his despatch would be intensely resented by the Turkish Government. The Government of India were accordingly informed that it was regarded as impossible to send a British Agent to Qatif pending negotiations.

Tel. from Viceroy to S. of S. for I., Feb. 27 1914. P. 768.

Tel. from S. of S. for I. to Viceroy, March 18 1914. P. 1080/14.

4. The outbreak of the war led to the question being dropped and it remained in abeyance until 1927. Consequent on the conclusion of the Treaty of Jeddah, it was, however, revived in that year by Ibn Saud, who, in a letter dated 12th October 1927 to the Political Resident in the Gulf, took specific exception to the local practice hitherto in force under which matters in dispute between Hasa and Bahrein had been settled by mutual arrangements with the Governor of Hasa, parties in cases being called to Bahrein to settle claims from the mainland and *vice versâ*. The King of the Hejaz expressed surprise at the action of the Political Agent in asking that a Qatifi should be sent to Bahrein, and requested that "international rules should be adhered to."

Tel. from Pol. Res. [illegible], May 5 1928, P. [illegible].

5. In these circumstances Sir L. Haworth suggested that Ibn Saud should be asked whether he saw objection to the appointment as British Consul for Qatif and Ojair of the Political Agent, Bahrein. It would, he thought, be necessary for the Consul to push claims against Hasa and visit the port for that purpose. Sir L. Haworth explained that his proposal was no more than that the Political Agent should be Consul for Hasa and Qatif, in the same way as His Majesty's Government maintained the Consul at Jeddah. In reply to a further enquiry by the Government of India whether the Political Agent in present circumstances ever visited Hasa, and whether any danger would be involved in his doing so, the

Tel. from Pol. Res. to C.O., April 27 1928. P. [illegible].



Resident stated that, no necessity having arisen, no Agent had visited Hasa since 1919, and that no danger would be involved, since the Agent would visit Qatif or Ojair only with the sanction of and under arrangements made with the Governor of Hasa in order to settle cases.

C.O. to I.O., April 28, 1928, P. 2186/28.

6. The Government of India, after consideration, expressed the view that the proposal, to which no exception was taken by the Colonial Office, was *prima facie* sound. As, however, there was no immediate urgency, it was decided that the Political Resident should be instructed to submit it in a despatch which should deal with the chances of Ibn Saud raising a counterclaim for a Consul at Bahrein. The final recommendations in the matter of the Political Resident and the Government of India have not yet been received.

Tel. from Viceroy to S. of S. for I., 929 S., May [illegible] 1928, P. [illegible]



Wireless Telegraph Stations in the Persian Gulf.

(Communicated by India Office and revised to August 1928.)

Early History: 1904-1915.

The first definite proposal for the use of wireless telegraphy in the Persian Gulf was made by the Political Resident, Bushire, in April 1908,* when he proposed that Koweit and Bahrein should be linked up with Bushire. The reasons advanced were—

(1) to give telegraphic facilities to the Political Agents of the Government of India recently (1904) appointed to Bahrein and Koweit;
(2) to facilitate the quarantine service of the Gulf;
(3) to assist the operations against the traffic in smuggled arms; and
(4) last, but not least, to assist our seaborne trade in the Gulf in its struggle against the active competition of foreign Powers.

The Secretary of State for India, for financial reasons, was not prepared at that time to take the proposal into practical consideration, while, apart from this, the question was bound up with a scheme then under consideration for the erection of wireless stations for strategic purposes along the coast of India.

2. It was soon after decided that a temporary wireless station should be erected at Jask to assist the operations for the suppression of the arms traffic. This station was opened on 24th December 1909 and, since it had been erected within the ground of the Telegraph concession there, it was not considered necessary to make any communication concerning it to the Persian Government.

3. In August 1909 Messrs. Wönckhaus's agent at Bahrein reported that his company were anxious to establish wireless telegraph communication between Bushire and Bahrein,† and it was agreed between the India Office and the Foreign Office that to forestall such a project the British scheme for wireless stations in the Persian Gulf should be proceeded with as rapidly as possible. It was proposed that the cost of the scheme should be shared between the British and Indian Exchequers, and the Treasury agreed to this in principle.

Erection of Present Stations: 1915-1917.

4. In a Despatch, No. 96, dated 24th August 1911, the Government of India submitted definite proposals, with estimates of the cost, for the establishment of wireless stations at Bushire, Henjam, Bahrein, Koweit and Debai (or Zora), with a portable station to be erected at Lingah when required. This scheme was sanctioned by the Secretary of State for India in his telegram of 20th February 1912. The station at Bushire was completed on 30th January 1915, that at Bahrein on 7th June 1916, and that at Henjam on the 10th October 1916. No station was erected at Debai or Zora. Work on the station at Koweit was commenced and the buildings were erected, but no wireless apparatus was installed as it was decided in 1916 to connect Koweit with the Mesopotamia telegraph system by erecting a land line to Zubair.

5. It was decided‡ that no communications should be made to the Persian Government regarding the erection of the stations at Henjam and Bushire. The station at **Henjam** was situated in the Telegraph concession there, and, as in the case of Jask, no notification to Persia was therefore deemed necessary. The case was different at **Bushire,** where there is no concession and the telegraph buildings are only hired. There had, however, been in operation there a small wireless installation erected by the Navy, to which no exception had been taken or question raised by the local authorities who made free use of it themselves, and it was decided that should the Governor of the Gulf Ports raise any question with regard to the permanent station and refer the matter to the Persian Government the explanation to be given was that improvements were being made in the existing installation in order to give better facilities in connection with the suppression of the arms traffic.

* P. [illegible]

P. [illegible]

† P. [illegible]

P. [illegible]

‡ P.W. [illegible]



"ملخص تاريخي للأحداث في أراضي الإمبراطورية العثمانية، فارس وشبه الجزيرة العربية التي تؤثر على الموقف البريطاني في الخليج الفارسي، ١٩٠٧-١٩٢٨" [‎٦٤ظ] (١٨٨/١٣٥)

6. During the war a proposal was made to erect land lines from Bunder Abbas to Kerman, Jask, and Lingah respectively. The line to Kerman was erected, but it was decided not to erect the line to Jask and, in substitution of the land line to Lingah, to erect a temporary wireless station there. The wireless station at Lingah was opened on 2nd October 1917 and no communication concerning it was made to the Persian Government.

Persian Requests for Removal of Stations: 1922.

7. In April 1922 the Persian Government asked for the removal of the wireless stations at Bushire, Henjam and Lingah.* His Majesty's Government considered it of importance that these stations should be retained in the hands of the Indo-European Telegraph Department, and the Minister at Teheran was accordingly authorised† to offer to the Persian Government one-third of the charge of 60 centimes a word levied on wireless messages on the understanding that the Persian Government agreed to the retention of the stations in the control of the Indo-European Telegraph Department. The Persian Government did not press their request for the removal of the stations and His Majesty's Minister therefore had no occasion to submit the offer which he had been authorised to make.‡ The Persian Government desired to raise the question of the status of the stations at the International Telegraph Conference held in Paris in 1925, but could not do so because the Conference was not competent to deal with such questions,§ nor was the question raised at the International Radiotelegraph Conference at Washington in 1927.

* P. 1084/23, P. [illegible]/28, P. [illegible]/22.

† P. [illegible]/22.

‡ P. [illegible]/23.

§ P. [illegible]/23.

Persian Prohibition of Import of Wireless Spare Parts: 1927.

8. In October 1927 the Persian Government prohibited the import into Persia of wireless telegraph or telephone apparatus,‖ but before the prohibition became effective a supply of spare parts was furnished to each station, and it is estimated that unless some accident occurs the stations can continue to function at least till the middle of 1929.

‖ Teh. tele. to F.O. [illegible], Feb. 27 1927, E. & O. [illegible]/27.

9. In November 1927 Sir R. Clive reported that the Russian Government had agreed to recognise the wireless station at Enzeli on the Caspian, with its plant and building, as the property of the Persian Government, on the understanding that they should be allowed its free use for a period of three years (extendible to five if at the end of three years no wireless station has been established by Persia), subject to certain provisos in regard to the free transmission of Persian Government messages, and to the restriction that the station should be used solely for the purposes of shipping. The Minister thought it unlikely that His Majesty's Government would succeed in improving on these terms in the case of the Gulf stations.

Teh. Desp. to F.O., 543, Nov. 5 1927, E. & O. [illegible]/27.

Desiderata of His Majesty's Government.

10. In view of the opening early in 1928 of general negotiations with Persia, and the possibility that the Persian Government might take the opportunity again to raise the question of the future of the wireless stations, discussion took place between the Government of India, the India Office and the Foreign Office as to the line to be followed in this event. It was agreed that the Minister at Teheran should be authorised, if negotiations became necessary, in the first instance to propose that the three stations at Bushire, Henjam and Lingah should become the property of Persia but should be leased to the Indo-European Telegraph Department until 1st January 1945, the date on which the concessions of the Indo-European Telegraph Department generally are due to expire, and that rent should be remitted in liquidation of the capital debt. It was recognised that there was little likelihood of these terms being acceptable to Persia, and the Minister was accordingly authorised, failing their acceptance, to make the best terms he could, provided that he did not, without further reference home, accept less than the free use of the Henjam station, without any restriction similar to that imposed on the Russians at Enzeli as to its employment solely for the purposes of shipping, for at least five years. The Persian Government have not so far raised the question, and no discussions have taken place.

F.O. Desp. to Teheran, 148, Mar. 22 1928, E. & O. [illegible]/28.

11. In a Despatch¶ to the Government of India of 28th April 1928, the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf has pointed out that the question of the efficient retention of the wireless stations at Bushire, Henjam and

¶ No. [illegible]/177 S., E. & O. [illegible]/28.



Lingah has become acute since the Persian Government has refused to allow the importation of spare parts for repairs. Sir L. Haworth states that the retention of one station only in Persia, preferably that at Henjam, failing which Bushire, in conjunction with the station at Bahrein (also controlled by the Indo-European Telegraph Department, and, unlike the other stations in the Gulf, run at a profit), is necessary for shipping work. He suggests that the probable desire of Persia to maintain stations at Bushire and Lingah might afford good ground for bargaining for the retention of Henjam. Should Persia prove obdurate, the needs of shipping might, he considers, be met by the erection of a station on the southern coast, probably near Ras-al-Khaimah—the existing cable between Jask and Bushire, if deflected to Ras-al-Khaimah *en route*, would provide immediate contact between Bahrein and Bushire *vid* Ras-al-Khaimah—in which case no Government wireless station would be necessary in Persia at all. (The possibility of using the island of Abu Musa (the Trucial ownership of which is, however, challenged by Persia) has also separately been suggested by the Resident.) But a decision on the question depends, he remarks, on the final decision arrived at with regard to the action and policy of His Majesty's Government in the Persian Gulf, and especially on the agreement which His Majesty's Minister succeeds in making on behalf of Imperial Airways, who would presumably erect their own short-range stations on whatever route they select.

Lr. from Pol. Res. to G. of I., 277 S., July 21 1928, P. 4482

Summary.

12. The position may be summarised as follows :—

(1) His Majesty's Government have no legal claim to any of the existing wireless stations on Persian territory (Lingah, Henjam, Bushire). In no case was Persian agreement secured to their erection. The station at Bahrein is not on Persian territory.

(2) Bahrein alone is at present run at a profit. The arguments for maintaining the remaining stations, even at a loss, and keeping them in British hands are firstly, efficiency (their value to shipping is substantial) and secondly, prestige.

(3) The stations on Persian soil have approximately one year's supply of spare parts, &c. The importation of further supplies has been prohibited by Persia (though it is not very clear how strictly the prohibition is being enforced) and failing withdrawal of this prohibition the stations will be forced to close through starvation in a very short period.

(4) If an agreement can be reached between Persia and Imperial Airways it will make a difference, since Imperial Airways will presumably erect their own short-range stations on whatever route they select. But on this point it will be seen from the note on Air Communications in the Persian Gulf that the Persian Government at present take the attitude that they will not agree to an international route along the Persian Gulf, and that they will insist on a clause being put in their agreement with Imperial Airways to the effect that when the three years, for which they have agreed to allow them to operate in that area, have passed, the route can in no circumstances be renewed. Unless the Persian Government modify their attitude, the making of an agreement by Imperial Airways is therefore unlikely to enure permanently to the advantage of His Majesty's Government, so far as wireless is concerned.

(5) The minimum requirement of His Majesty's Government would appear to be one station, to work in conjunction with the station at Bahrein, and in communication with ships at sea, situated either—

(*a*) **On the Persian littoral of the Gulf**, in which case it should preferably be on the island of **Henjam**, or, failing that, Bushire;

(*b*) **On the Arabian littoral**, in which case it would probably either be in Muscat territory, or near Ras-al-Khaimah, at which point the existing Jask-Bushire cable could be so deflected as to provide immediate contact between Bahrein and Bushire *vid* Ras-al-Khaimah.





Air Communications in the Persian Gulf.

(Communicated by the Air Ministry and revised to 23rd August 1928.)

The necessity for an organised air route for British aircraft, both Service and Civil, to connect Egypt and Iraq with India, has long been realised; and the negotiations and technical preparations necessary to this end have been proceeding ever since the end of the Great War, though not without numerous difficulties and delays.

It is practicable to organise an air route along either shore of the Gulf. The route along the Persian shore is the better, since the Arabian shore route includes an oversea flight of some 226 miles. The latter route also entails the use of landing grounds on the Hasa and Trucial coasts, and on this account, under the conditions obtaining at the present time, would afford less security for passengers and aircraft than the Persian route. These conditions, however, may be expected to improve.

Though the Persian route is the better for a regular civil passenger air service, the Arabian shore route, whether ultimately used as a civil air route or not, is required as a strategic air route for Service aircraft which might be unable by reason of Persian neutrality to use the Persian route.

The history of the development of these two routes is related in the following paragraphs. A map of the routes is attached.

The Air Route along the Persian Shore.

Flights along the route.

The first flight between Iraq and India along this route took place in December 1918, and was carried out by a Service aircraft of the Royal Air Force. The Persian Government had at that time little control of their coast line, and the question of obtaining permission for the flight did not then arise. The landing grounds which were required for this flight were prepared by Royal Air Force personnel, and are those which have been used up to the present time (1928).

This route was followed in 1919 by the pioneer long-distance flights to the East, and in 1920 a Flight of Royal Air Force aircraft from Iraq was based at Bushire to assist the British Resident in the maintenance of order. This Flight was withdrawn in the autumn of 1921 when it became necessary to concentrate all available aircraft in Iraq.

Since that date the air route along the Persian shore has been used at irregular intervals by both British and foreign aircraft. Several flights have been carried out by Service aircraft of the Royal Air Force, but most of the flights have been by civil aircraft.

The Association of the Government of India with the route.

The following extracts from the memorandum by the Indian Air Board, prepared in 1926, entitled "The Past History and Future Development of Civil Aviation in India," describe the association of the Indian Government with the Persian route along the Gulf:—

> "The question of linking India with the outer world by a line of air communications was first raised in June 1919, when a scheme was put forward by the Air Ministry for the establishment of an air service between Cairo and Karachi. The objects of this scheme were mainly military, though the carriage of mails was also contemplated. The Government of India supported the proposals, and, on the understanding that a weekly service would be instituted, agreed to provide and maintain the necessary aerodromes and buildings from Karachi to Bushire, at an estimated cost of Rs. 13¼ lakhs initial and Rs. 30,000 recurring. The British Government were to be responsible for providing the necessary machines, the pay and maintenance of the unit, the cost of flying and any other liabilities. It was considered at the time that Karachi must eventually be the aerial gateway of India, and it was realised that, even should the proposed service not be a success, Government would have a permanent asset in the aerodromes and buildings there, upon which it was anticipated that some 80 per cent. of their contribution would be spent.



"Before, however, any action was taken in the matter, the British Government decided to abandon the proposal for the carriage of mails by the suggested service. It would, they decided, be preferable to deal with the scheme as a military proposition, pure and simple, leaving the question of the inauguration of a civil mail service for separate consideration. As it had, in the meantime, been decided independently, as part of the Royal Air Force organisation, to establish an aircraft depôt at Karachi, the only extra expenditure involved in the proposal in which, on the analogy of the previous arrangements, India was interested, was that to be incurred at Bushire, Bender Abbas, and Charbar, estimated, on the reduced scale possible owing to the less ambitious nature of the scheme, to cost about Rs. 1 lakh. The Government of India agreed, as with other similar charges in Persia, to bear half this expenditure. But the military service has never, in fact, been extended to India; it has been confined to the section Cairo-Baghdad, and consequently the anticipated expenditure upon the Persian Gulf aerodromes has not been incurred.

"The proposed civil mail service over the route was the subject of discussion between the British and Indian Governments in 1920, and the latter, although they were, in the conditions then obtaining, somewhat sceptical of its prospects of success, declared themselves ready, if the scheme matured, to adhere to the undertaking which they had given in the previous year, which involved their bearing the whole cost of the depôt at Karachi and half that of the three principal aerodromes in the Persian Gulf. They also offered to guarantee a sum of Rs. 1 lakh per annum for three years towards the deficit in the working of the mail service. This offer was, however, never accepted, as, owing to unsettled conditions in Arabia and Mesopotamia, the whole proposal was dropped. It was, however, realised that, even in the absence of such a service, India had a genuine interest in the upkeep of a connecting link, for use when necessary, between the Middle East and Karachi, and in 1921 Government agreed and have continued to make a small contribution to the maintenance of the aerodromes at Bushire, Bunder Abbas, and Charbar, equivalent to half the actual expenditure upon them, limited to £850 for capital and £400 for annual recurring charges. This, together with a similar contribution from the British Government, has sufficed for the provision of absolutely essential facilities in the shape of go-downs, &c., for the repairs periodically required, and for the pay of the necessary watch and ward establishment."

The attitude of Persia towards the use of the route by a regular Civil Air Service.

Persia adhered to the International Convention for Air Navigation in 1920, the Persian Minister in Paris being instructed by his Government to notify the Government of the French Republic of the adherence, at the same time stating that the Persian Government "reserves the right to prepare as and when it becomes possible the means and the new organisations which the execution of the clauses of the said Convention necessitate."

Although the Mejlis has, however, never officially ratified this adherence, Persia has sent official representatives to many of the meetings of the International Commission for Air Navigation and has paid almost up-to-date her contributions towards the expenses of the Commission. Consequently, there would appear to be no doubt that Persia is in fact a party to the International Air Convention of 1919.

Persia, however, has done little towards taking steps to give effect to her adherence to the Convention either in the direction of ground organisation or of air regulations. However, in connection with the fulfilment of her obligations she proceeded to give general notification of certain routes through her territory along which flying could take place. At our request the route along the Persian shore of the Gulf was included in the possible routes.

Objection has never been taken by Persia to individual flights of civil aircraft over her territory, but she has taken exception to the operation by Imperial Airways, Limited, of a regular service along the Persian Gulf, though at a later date she offered to allow the operation of a service along one of the other notified routes through Central Persia.

During 1925 a fortnightly civil air service between Cairo and Karachi, to be operated by Imperial Airways, Limited, was projected. The use, for this service, of a route through Central Persia was considered, but owing to the difficulty and expense of supplying landing grounds with fuel and stores this route was not considered



practicable. Negotiations were opened with the Persian Government, who agreed that representatives of the Air Ministry and of Imperial Airways, Limited, should fly along the Gulf in a service aircraft of the Royal Air Force to investigate local conditions. This reconnaissance was carried out in the autumn of 1925, and in September of that year Air Vice-Marshal Sir Sefton Brancker, the Director of Civil Aviation, visited Tehran with a view to assisting the British Minister, Sir Percy Loraine, in arranging an agreement for the service with the Persian Government.

A satisfactory agreement was concluded in less than a week, largely owing to the cordial relations existing between Riza Khan (then Prime Minister of Persia) and Sir Percy Loraine. The Persian representatives reaffirmed their desire to conform to the terms of the International Air Convention. They were very definite in their view that the ground organisation of the route must be Persian, but indicated that it was impossible for Persia to contribute towards the cost of it. Notes were exchanged in which it was agreed (subject to ratification by the Mejlis of the International Air Convention) to allow Imperial Airways, Limited, to operate a fortnightly service, the British Government undertaking to provide any sheds, buildings and wireless equipment necessary. These items were to become Persian property when completed, with the exception of the wireless equipment, which was to be sold to Persia on a basis of periodic payments.

It was indicated during these negotiations that the Persians were ready within their limitations to give effect to their obligations under the Convention to afford liberty of innocent passage across their territory and to provide facilities therefor.

The ratification by the Mejlis of the Convention, however, was deferred through 1926 in spite of the endeavours of the British Minister, and this fact was used as a pretext for withholding permission for the operation of the service by Imperial Airways between Basrah and Karachi.

Meanwhile, work on the organisation of the route began; measures were taken for the erection of huts and the installation of petrol tanks; and wireless equipment was delivered.

In December 1926 the Persian Government gave orders that work on the ground organisation of the route must cease and that the service could not be permitted.

In January 1927 Air Vice-Marshal Sir Sefton Brancker again visited Tehran, where Sir Robert Clive had just arrived as British Minister. Conferences were held and promises were made that the Convention would be ratified at an early date.

Subsequently, however, it became clear that the Persian Government had in fact at that time no intention of carrying out their agreement. It would appear that their attitude was due to three reasons :—

(i) The route would be of no great value to Persia herself.
(ii) The Persian Government did not wish the route to be administered by foreigners and feared the responsibility and cost of administering it themselves.
(iii) The Persian Government were afraid that the regular operation of a British civil air service would increase British influence in the Persian Gulf.

The discussion reached a deadlock, which persisted until it became possible to bring pressure to bear on the Persians to reopen the negotiations under the terms of the new treaty with Persia concluded in the spring of the present year (1928).

Following on a visit to Tehran by the General Manager of Imperial Airways, Limited, in June 1928, the Persian Government has agreed to allow the Company as from January 1929 to operate a limited service along the route, using only Bushire and Jask as aerodromes and Lengeh as an emergency landing ground.

The Persian Government have said, categorically, that permission will not be renewed after a period of three years has expired, which in their opinion should allow the Company time to study the possibilities of operating a Central Persian route through Tehran, the route which they wish followed.

The Persian Government also insist on retaining the ground organisation for the three years' service along the Persian Gulf in their own hands, including the provision of petrol installations and the provision and operation of the wireless service.

This offer, which has several very undesirable restrictions attaching to it, is now receiving the consideration of the Air Ministry and Imperial Airways, Limited.

The Air Route along the Arabian Shore.

It is desired for this air route to establish refuelling grounds at intervals of about 200 miles and emergency landing grounds at intervals of 30-50 miles. It would not



be necessary normally for aircraft to refuel at all these landing grounds, but at certain times of year strong adverse winds are encountered in these regions and may make an intermediate landing necessary for fuel.

The route is described below by sections. At the present time flights have only been made over the Kuwait and Hasa sections between Iraq and Bahrein. These sections have not yet been reconnoitred on the ground, and the ground reconnaissance of several of the other sections has not yet been completed.

Kuwait Section.—Kuwait has been visited by Royal Air Force service aircraft at intervals since 1920, and a landing ground near the town is in existence. In 1920 the Shaikh of Kuwait asked for help in the defence of his territory against the Akhwan. Two aircraft were accordingly despatched to drop leaflets on the Akhwan, warning them that offensive action would be taken against them if they made any attempt to attack the town. This had the desired effect. In 1924, when a Royal Air Force aircraft returning from a flight to Bahrein had made a forced landing some distance away on the Kuwait coastline, the Shaikh lent his own cars and staff to go out to its relief. In the present year (1928), the Shaikh of Kuwait again asked for our assistance against a threatened Akhwan attack, and a flight of aircraft and section of armoured cars were sent to Kuwait. No Akhwan attack, however, was made.

Hasa Section.—The reconnaissance of the Hasa coast section has had to be postponed again and again owing to difficulty in obtaining sanction from Ibn Saud. One refuelling ground in the neighbourhood of Ras-as-Safaniyah and two emergency landing grounds are required. In order that our request might be presented in the most favourable light, the opportunity was awaited of the visit of Sir Gilbert Clayton to Ibn Saud in May 1927. In reply to our request to carry out the reconnaissance, Ibn Saud asked for more complete information, and it was explained to him through His Britannic Majesty's Consul at Jeddah that we required to make a reconnaissance, on the ground only, for the purpose of selecting sites for landing grounds, and that aircraft would not use these landing grounds until his agreement had been obtained.

Delay ensued, however, in view of the wish expressed by Ibn Saud to send a representative to Hasa to ascertain the local conditions before acceding to our request. His Britannic Majesty's Consul at Jeddah was of the opinion that at this time Ibn Saud was not unfavourably disposed towards the project for an air route; but was actuated by genuine anxiety for the safety of the reconnaissance party in Hasa.

Four months later, in September 1927, a reply was received from Ibn Saud to the effect that he could not sanction the reconnaissance owing to the attitude of the Hasa tribes, whose suspicions had been aroused by the establishment of military posts in the southern desert of Iraq.

Thereafter, it was the intention that the British Resident, Bushire, should endeavour to obtain permission, and he was instructed to raise the question on the occasion of his projected interview with Ibn Saud in regard to the Akhwan raid on Busaiyah police post in Iraq in November 1927. This interview, however, did not take place. Since that date the Akhwan situation has prevented any further representations being made to Ibn Saud; and no favourable opportunity occurred for the reopening of the subject during the recent conversations in June 1928 between Sir Gilbert Clayton and Ibn Saud.

Bahrein.—No flights were made to Bahrein prior to 1924. Early in that year, in view of the interest aroused locally by the purchase of some foreign aircraft by the Persian Government, the British Resident at Bahrein requested that a flight of service aircraft should visit the island for the purpose of "showing the flag."

A Royal Air Force ground reconnaissance party was sent to the island and a landing ground selected, and in May 1924 a flight of Royal Air Force service aircraft flew from Iraq to Bahrein and made several flights over the island. Sheikh Mahommed of Bahrein was flown and the visit of the aircraft met with a most friendly reception.

Ibn Saud objected to this flight on the ground that it caused consternation among his subjects. A reply was sent to the effect that the aircraft did not fly over his territory, but along the coastline, that being the most direct route between Kuwait and Bahrein.

No further flights over these sections were made until 1927, when the journey was twice flown by civil aircraft of Imperial Airways, Limited. On the first of these occasions a Shaikh Abdul Rahman Qasaibi, who had represented himself as being one



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of the principal advisers to Ibn Saud, was carried. It transpired later, however, that this Shaikh had formed an exaggerated view of his own position, and that in giving permission for the flight he had acted without authority. On the occasion of the second flight permission was not sought and the aircraft flew a course outside territorial waters.

At about this time (August 1927) enquiries were made of Imperial Airways, Limited, with a view to the operation of a fortnightly flight from Bahrein to Basrah for the transport of pearls. Although this project was abandoned, it is an indication of one of the uses which a civil air route down the Arabian shore could serve.

Summary.—As regards the sections between Iraq and Bahrein the present position is therefore that one refuelling ground and two emergency landing grounds have still to be selected before this part of the route can be regarded as fully satisfactory; and arrangements have still to be concluded with Ibn Saud for the carrying out of this reconnaissance, and for the use of the route. Aircraft, however, have already flown between Koweit and Bahrein without requiring to make an intermediate landing.

Sections from Bahrein to Muscat.—In March 1927 an Royal Air Force ground reconnaissance party visited these sections. All the sites required for refuelling grounds were reconnoitred and selected. That is to say, Yas Island, Abu Dhabi, Al Aubi and Muscat. Of the emergency grounds required, however, it was only possible, owing to the attitude of the minor Shaikhs, to select definitely those in the Batina section (towards Muscat).

Attitude of the minor Shaikhs.—The Shaikhs whose authority lies mainly on the coastline and does not extend inland, e.g. the Shaikh of Abu Dhabi, and those in the Batina section, which includes Al Aubi, are under British influence and are at the mercy of any action we might take from the sea. The few inhabitants of Yas Island were also found friendly, and no difficulty, therefore, should arise in establishing the landing grounds required at Yas Island, Abu Dhabi, and in the Batina section. The attitude of the Sultan of Muscat has throughout been most friendly.

The Shaikhs, however, whose territory extends further inland are naturally more at the mercy of Ibn Saud and have accepted Wahabism to a greater extent. Thus, the Shaikh of Qatar was opposed to the establishment of a landing ground in his territory, stating to the reconnaissance party that it would place him in great difficulty with the subjects of Ibn Saud, who visited his port in considerable numbers. In regard to his objection, however, it was observed by the British Resident at Bushire that these difficulties might not be found to be insuperable, but might be surmounted by a financial arrangement. The Bariami Shaikh (Oman section) definitely barred the progress of the reconnaissance party, stating that the country belonged to Ibn Saud; and in spite of every effort by the British Wazir of Muscat who accompanied the party, refused to grant permission to proceed and obliged the party to turn northward out of his country to Sharjah.

Summary.—On these sections, therefore, between Bahrein and Muscat, the present position (1928) is that the refuelling grounds required have been reconnoitred but the intermediate emergency landing grounds have for the most part not yet been reconnoitred; and it is necessary to arrange for the completion of the reconnaissance and the use of the route.

Baluchistan Section.—From Muscat this route leaves the Arabian shore and crosses by a sea flight of 226 miles to the Baluchistan coast at Gwadar. No difficulties are anticipated in regard to facilities on the Baluchistan section. The Government of India have already agreed to provide a landing ground near Pasni.





(69)

Slavery in the Persian Gulf.

(*Communicated by India Office and revised to 29th September* 1928.)

Introductory.

1. The status of slavery is legally recognised in the Koran—an important consideration in dealing with the question of slavery in an area ruled exclusively, and peopled predominantly, by Mohammedans. Moreover, alike on the Trucial Arab Coast and in the dominions of Ibn Saud, the custom of house-born slaves is one which is firmly established, and the eradication of which is likely to cause serious difficulty.

Treaty Engagements of the Arab States of the Gulf.

2. From the précis of Treaties with the Chiefs of the Gulf States contained in the Appendix to this Memorandum it will be seen that the engagements of **Bahrein**, the **Trucial Sheikhdoms**, and **Muscat**, to His Majesty's Government bind them to suppress and to abstain from the slave trade in their territories, and empower His Majesty's Government to search their vessels on their behalf, not only on the high seas, but in Arab and Muscat waters. On the occasion of the conclusion of the Treaty of 3rd November 1916 with **El Katr**, under which the Sheikh accepted obligations similar to those of the other Trucial Chiefs, it was agreed, however, that he and his subjects should be allowed to retain negro slaves already in their possession, on condition of their treatment being satisfactory. No formal engagement exists in the case of **Koweit**: but the degree of control and influence exercised in that State by His Majesty's Government and the Government of India may be regarded as sufficient to enable them to impose in practice an effective check on slave traffic within its boundaries. Under Article 7 of the Treaty of Jeddah of 20th May 1927 **Ibn Saud** has undertaken to co-operate by all the means at his disposal with His Majesty's Government in the suppression of the slave trade, while a separate exchange of Notes took place with the King of Hejaz and Nejd on the same occasion regarding the retention by His Majesty's Government of the right to manumit slaves through their consular officers.

Treaty Engagements of Persia.

3. The suppression of the traffic in slaves as between His Majesty's Government and Persia is governed by the Convention between Great Britain and Persia of 2nd March 1882. Under this Convention the Persian Government agree to take steps for the suppression of the trade, and to the search, detention, and bringing for trial before the nearest Persian authorities by His Majesty's ships of merchant vessels under the Persian flag or belonging to Persian subjects which may be engaged, or which there may be reasonable grounds for suspecting to be, or to have been, engaged, during the voyage on which they are met, in carrying slaves. A special proviso deals with the position of slaves accompanying an individual to the pilgrimage places under a passport countersigned by the British authority. The Convention further provides that a representative of the British Government shall be present at the adjudication on any merchant vessel under the Persian flag captured by a British cruiser and taken into a Persian port for that purpose; that the proceeds of the sale of such a vessel, if condemned, shall go to Persia; and that the slaves found on board be handed over to Great Britain.

4. The history of the Gulf as a centre of slaving activity is notorious, and the relatively satisfactory condition of affairs described below represents the result of over a century of unceasing vigilance on the part of His Majesty's Government. The slave trade in the Gulf has now been under effective control for many years, and it is unnecessary in the circumstances to examine in detail its history since 1908. The statement which follows confines itself accordingly to setting out the position as regards slavery at the present time on the Arabian and on the Persian littoral of the Gulf



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respectively, and the course of the discussions which have taken place consequent on the recent intimation by Persia that she regards as derogatory to her dignity the Anglo-Persian Slavery Convention of 1882.

Present position on the Arab Litteral of the Gulf.

5. The effect of the engagements referred to in para. 2 above, of the degree of control exercised by His Majesty's Government in Koweit, and of the energetic and unremitting activity of successive political officers and of His Majesty's ships, has been to reduce the slave traffic on the Arab littoral of the Persian Gulf to relatively unimportant dimensions. From a Report submitted by the Political Resident in the Gulf on 10th June 1928,* it appears that all the slave trade which now exists, other than such as may emanate from Nejd, is from Persian Baluchistan to the Trucial Arab coast, on which slavery is still common—the Batinah coast of Muscat (portions of which are not under the effective control of the Muscat authorities) being frequently used as a *pied à terre*, and the small Trucial Sheikhdom of Dubai playing a prominent part. On a broad view, however, though the Political Resident can report that "at Koweit, and on the Arab coast, there are many thousands of slaves who have been brought from the interior at some time,"† the problem, so far as the Arab States of the Gulf are concerned, may be regarded as one of relatively small importance; the treaty engagements and the special relations which exist between His Majesty's Government and the rulers of those States are, so far as can be judged, adequate, if strictly interpreted, to secure that no recrudescence of the slave traffic shall take place on the Arabian shore of the Gulf; the hold exercised by Hindu merchants over the pearl fishing industry affords a guarantee of some value that the presence of Indian slaves in the Gulf cannot long pass unnoticed, and, in the light of Sir Lionel Haworth's Report referred to above, the Government of India, who are fully alive to the importance of the question, have recently approved the Resident's proposal "to tighten up the reading of our Treaties with the Sheikhs to the most favourable interpretation to which it is possible to bring them in this connection," and have instructed him to devote his special attention to Dubai, and to "consider the advisability of making it quite clear to the Sheikh that any connivance by him in the traffic, or indeed any slackness on his part to suppress it, will bring him within their displeasure, which they will not hesitate to manifest."

* P. 4481

† Tel. from Pol. Res. to G. of I., July 21 1928, P. [illegible]

Lr. from Pol. Res. to G. of I., June 10 1928, P. 4481.

Present position on the Persian Littoral.

6. It is equally the case that the measures taken under the Anglo-Persian Convention of 1882 (and, in so far as Gwadur is concerned, under the treaty engagements of the Sultan of Muscat with His Majesty's Government) have resulted in the reduction to relatively unimportant dimensions of the slave trade on the Persian littoral. The extent, however, to which, despite the endeavours of His Majesty's Government, the slave traffic between Persia and the Arab coast continues to persist is described by the Government of India as disquieting, and the danger of its revival on a larger scale is one which cannot be overlooked.‡ The absence of effective control by Persia of Persian Baluchistan has resulted in a small but regular traffic from that area, in which§ slavery is stated to be rife. In Sir L. Haworth's view this traffic is likely to continue until Persia is in a position to establish such control. Active steps are, however, being taken by Sir L. Haworth locally to put a stop to it, while the Government of India, as the result of his report, have taken action to improve co-ordination in preventive measures between the authorities in Sind and British Baluchistan and the British officials in the Gulf.

Tel. from Viceroy, April 20 1928, P. [illegible]

‡ P. [illegible]/28.

§ Tel. from Viceroy, [illegible] S., April 26 1928, P. [illegible]

Lr. from G. of I. to Pol. Res., Aug. 27 1928, P. [illegible]

Persian representations regarding abrogation of Slavery Convention of 1882 with Great Britain.

7. The Persian Government in April of this year indicated, in the first stage in their general negotiations with His Majesty's Government, that they regarded the Slavery Convention of 1882 as one derogatory to Persian dignity, and, while it is not yet clear whether they intend to press for its abrogation, the question of the attitude to be adopted in face of such a

Tel. [illegible] to F.O., April 1 1928, P. [illegible]



demand, if made, has been under the active consideration of the Government of India and His Majesty's Government.

PERSIA AND THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS SLAVERY CONVENTION OF 1926.

8. The position is complicated by the existence of the League of Nations Slavery Convention of 1926. The Convention in question imposes on the States adhering to it a binding obligation to take, within their capacity, all possible action to prevent and to suppress the slave trade, and to bring about, progressively and as soon as possible, the complete abolition of slavery in all its forms. It provides further, however, in the first place (Article 3), that States adhering to its terms shall remain free to conclude, subject to its provisions, such special agreements as, by reason of their peculiar situation, may appear suitable to attain its objects, and, secondly, (Article 9), that States shall be at liberty to adhere to it subject to reservations in respect of the application of the Convention or part of it to some or all of the territories of the State concerned.

9. Were Persia to sign and ratify the Convention in question in respect of the Persian Gulf, and were she in a position effectively to discharge in that area the international obligations undertaken by her under the Convention, the case for a special agreement between her and His Majesty's Government on the general lines of the Slavery Convention of 1882, would be substantially weakened, if not destroyed, although the terms of Article 3 of the Convention, to which reference is made above, would clearly leave it open to her to conclude such an agreement. In fact, however, while the Convention was signed by the Persian representative at the League, his signature was given *ad referendum* (and subject to a specific minor reservation), and the Convention has not been ratified by Persia. Moreover, even were she to ratify it, in its present form, she would be incapable, as matters stand, of discharging effectively the obligations which it would impose upon her, for there is no Persian Navy (other than a few Customs preventive boats), and the local Persian officials in the Gulf are stated by the Political Resident to be of such a character that, in the absence of the Convention of 1882, they would themselves participate in the slave traffic.

10. The available evidence indicates that relaxation, even, of the precautions at present taken under the Convention of 1882 to prevent slavery in the Gulf is likely to lead to a serious recrudescence of the slave traffic. The apparent impotence of Persia to substitute an effective preventive service of her own and the importance of provision for the effective discharge in the Gulf of the humanitarian and international obligations at present discharged by His Majesty's Government under the 1882 Convention, make it desirable, therefore, that if that Convention is to be revised, the new Instrument, if any, to be substituted for it in deference to Persian susceptibilities, should differ from it in form and not in substance. From a different standpoint it is desirable that whatever compromise is offered to Persia should aim at retaining control by His Majesty's Government of preventive action (the objections to the development of a Persian Naval Force, which in present circumstances would probably be officered from foreign and non-British sources, are patent), and at retaining the present immunity of British ships from search on the high seas by Persian vessels.

Attitude to be adopted towards a Persian demand for abrogation.

VIEWS OF FOREIGN OFFICE.

11. A final decision has not been reached as to the offer to be made to Persia should she press for the abrogation of the Convention of 1882. The Foreign Office in June 1928 expressed the view that His Majesty's Government should assent to such a demand on the understanding only that the Convention should be replaced by a new Convention which, in order to meet Persian susceptibilities regarding unequal treaties, should be drafted on a basis of reciprocity, and should generally follow, subject to certain modifications, the lines of an existing Slavery Treaty between His Majesty's Government and another first-class Power, such as the Anglo-Italian Slavery Treaty of 1889. (A Convention on these lines would, it may be remarked, empower Persian vessels to search British ships



on the high seas suspected of engaging in the slave traffic, and to detain or divert them from their course where *primâ facie* evidence of complicity existed.)

VIEWS OF INDIA OFFICE AND ADMIRALTY.

12. Subsequent consideration has proceeded on the basis of the Foreign Office proposals. Those proposals, and the question as a whole, have now been examined by the Government of India, the India Office and the Admiralty. Subject to certain supplementary observations set out in para. 14 below, the Admiralty concur in the conclusions reached on the matter by the Secretary of State for India in the light of the considered recommendations of the Government of India and the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, and communicated to the Foreign Office on 8th September. Those conclusions are as follow:—

I.O. to F.O., Sept. 8, 1928, P. 2760.

(*a*) That in the forthcoming negotiations His Majesty's Government should aim at securing that vessels flying the British flag shall retain their present immunity from search on the high seas by Persian vessels (which is regarded as essential); that no substantial relaxation of preventive measures shall take place in the Gulf; and that preventive action in the Gulf shall so far as possible remain in the hands of His Majesty's Government.

(*b*) That, in the first instance, endeavours should be made to secure an agreement with Persia on the basis of a modernisation of the form while retaining the essential matter of the 1882 Convention, the key-note of the new Convention being possibly, as suggested by the Government of India, that Persia, being desirous of putting down the slave traffic, had secured the naval assistance of His Majesty's Government, instead of, as at present, that an unwilling Persia was being forced to suppress the slave traffic by His Majesty's Government.

(*c*) That the right of searching vessels in Persian territorial waters at present exercised by His Majesty's Government under the Slavery Convention might be abandoned should some further concession be necessary.

[*Note.*—Persia already enjoys the right to search British vessels in Persian territorial waters, and the effect of the concession in question would be to leave the policing of Persian waters exclusively to her. It may be remarked that in the view of the Government of India even this gap in the preventive system is beyond Persia's power to fill.]

(*d*) That a concession by which His Majesty's Government should abandon their right to search Persian vessels on the high seas and should restrict their search of such vessels to Arab waters (in which, under their treaties with the various Arab Sheikhs, the right of search of all vessels is vested in them), would be in the highest degree objectionable, as amounting to a virtual abandonment *in toto* of the Convention of 1882, while the loss of power to search suspected Persian vessels on the high seas must necessarily curtail the effectiveness of His Majesty's ships in keeping down the slave traffic.

(*e*) That in view of the present impotence of Persia to substitute effective preventive slavery measures of her own, the propriety of invoking the assistance of the League of Nations, in the general interests of civilisation, should be considered should Persia adopt an unreasonable attitude and reject a compromise on the lines set out in (*b*) and (*c*) above, and that the adoption of this course should equally be considered in the event of a unilateral denunciation by Persia of the Convention of 1882.

Adm. to F.O., Sept. 13 1928, P. 3049.

14. The Admiralty, in expressing their concurrence in the views of the Secretary of State for India as set out above, added that in their view if the compromises proposed by the India Office were not acceptable, His Majesty's Government should give up any idea of making a Slavery Convention with Persia; and that if there were a unilateral denunciation of the 1882 Convention, Persia, as a member of the League of Nations, should be pressed to take steps as soon as it is clear that she has failed to suppress the slave traffic.



Lighting and Buoying of the Persian Gulf, 1908-1928.

(Communicated by India Office and revised to 29th August 1928.)

I.—First Reconstruction: 1909-14.

1. For many years before 1909 the lighting and buoying of the Persian Gulf had been left almost entirely to private enterprise. The British India Steam Navigation Company were principally concerned with such arrangements as existed, and in 1909 were maintaining 15 buoys and one beacon (at Bahrein) in the Gulf. The Government of India had erected one beacon at Ras al Arz, Koweit, and the Belgian Customs Administration one at Ras al Marg, Bushire; some sporadic buoying had also been carried out. Turkish lights and buoys were maintained at the head of the Gulf. The question of regulating the service was, however, brought into prominence by the increase of German and Turkish activities in the Gulf early in the century. In 1907, for instance, the Hamburg-Amerika Company proposed to contribute to the upkeep of the British India Steam Navigation Company's buoys, and as this seemed to be the beginning of a political move it was suggested that the British Government should take over the whole service.

P. [illegible]

2. The Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence in their Report of the 26th January 1909, having learned from evidence given that the lighting, &c., in the Gulf was unsatisfactory, supported a recommendation already made by the Government of India that a Commission should be sent to the Gulf to collect information with a view to improving conditions at small cost. A Committee of Enquiry was appointed and reported on the 29th April 1909; they recommended a large reorganisation, detailed in a supplementary report.

Letter from Trinity House to I.O., June 1 1909, P. 1366/09, 2628/09 Memo. B. 158, 159 from I.O.

3. It was decided that Government should undertake responsibility for the service, and long correspondence ensued between the Home Departments concerned and with the Government of India. By 1912 the following programme of reconstruction had been worked out and sanctioned:—

3 lighthouses at Musandim (Little Quoin), Tamb, and Sheikh Shuaib.
1 lightvessel outside the Shatt-el-Arab.
6 lighted buoys (Bushire 2, Bahrein 2, Bander Abbas and Shatt-el-Arab).
3 unlit buoys (together with certain buoys taken over from the British India Steam Navigation Company).
1 lighthouse tender.
1 lighthouse depôt.

Letter from I.O. to Trinity House, Mar. 2 1912, P. 442/12; Memo. B. 183 from I.O., P. 4994/11; Memo. B. 141a from I.O., P. 4379/12.

4. Meanwhile the obstructive activities of the Turkish authorities continued and counterbuoying was carried on by them, especially in the Shatt-el-Arab. It is unnecessary, however, to consider these activities in detail, since by the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 29th July 1913, which was awaiting ratification on the outbreak of war, the Ottoman Government undertook, while reserving Turkish territorial rights, not to oppose measures which His Majesty's Government might carry out in respect of surveys, lighting, buoying or pilotage.

5. The main features of the programme of reconstruction were carried out in 1912-14. Lighted buoys for Bushire, Bahrein and Bander Abbas were sent out from this country in June and September 1912. A lighted buoy had already in 1911 been placed at the outer bar of the Shatt. Unlit buoys were manufactured in India. The Tamb light was exhibited in July 1913, the Little Quoin light in January 1914. The Shatt-el-Arab lightvessel was despatched to the Gulf and established in April 1914; a protest was made by the Turkish Government against its establishment, but it was pointed out that the ship was 10 miles outside the bar, and not in Turkish territorial waters. The lighthouse tender, named *Nearchus*, was built and sailed for India in December 1914. (The despatch vessel R.I.M.S. *Lawrence*

P. 2232/12, 2964/12.

P. 1496/14.
Tel. from Viceroy, April 14 1914, P. 1472/14.

Desp. from Constantinople, Sept. 3 1914, P. 4248/14.



had been used as tender in the meantime.) The personnel for tending the lights was recruited in India. A convenient source of oil supply was at hand in the Anglo-Persian Oil Company.

6. The only parts of the programme not completed were (a) the Sheikh Shuaib light, (b) the lighthouse depôt. These are dealt with below. Notifications of the various aids to navigation were given from time to time to mariners and in some cases to foreign Consular representatives. In June 1914 the Political Resident was instructed to issue a complete notification of all changes and improvements to the Local Government at Bushire and the Customs authorities, and to keep both them and the Consular representatives informed of future developments.

II.—1914-25. Expansion.

7. Certain extensions of the original programme were also carried out. Masthead lights on the Henjam and Chahbar telegraph stations, like those already in existence at Jask, were exhibited in 1914.

8. In 1913-4 the Political Resident proposed a general overhaul of beacons. The following beacons were to be maintained:—Koweit (Ras-al-Arz), Bushire (Ras-al-Marg), Jask, Henjam and Basidu. New beacons were to be built at Kubbar (near Koweit), Khor Kaliya (near Bahrein) and Halul. That at Halul was to be erected not so much to aid navigation as to establish a foothold against Turkish and German designs; the ownership of the island being, as will be seen from the memorandum on page 107, undecided, though there are some grounds for considering it under Abu Dhabi. All the proposals were sanctioned by the early part of 1914.

9. Later in the same year the question arose of the ownership of certain islands off the coast between Koweit and Bahrein, and, mainly for political reasons, beacons which might help, if necessary, to establish a claim to ownership were sanctioned, and set up in 1915, on the islands of Farsi, Arabi and Harkus.

10. The beacon at Henjam (Ras-al-Mashia) was restored in 1917, and a light placed on it. That at Halul was removed from charts, &c., on a report from R.I.M.S. *Nearchus* in 1923.

11. In 1917 the Government of India represented that lighthouses at Muscat, Henjam and Sheikh Shuaib were "an urgent necessity." A light for Muscat was immediately sanctioned and erected; it was removed to another position in 1926. A temporary lighthouse was erected at Henjam (Ras-al-Mashia) in 1920, and another at Jask. The Sheikh Shuaib project again failed to mature (see IV (*d*)), but a temporary lightship was established, as a substitute, off Kais Island in 1918, and was replaced by a semi-permanent vessel in 1923.

12. Shatt-el-Arab.—In 1916-7 a general reorganisation of the buoying of the river entrance was carried out for war purposes. The channel was marked by three gas buoys and eight unlit buoys. Shortly after the war, however, the lighting and buoying of the Shatt-el-Arab was taken over by the Basra Port Directorate and ceased to be the concern of the Government of India.

13. Lighthouse Depôt.—The original scheme of reconstruction provided for a depôt at Koweit, but Abadan island was found to be more suitable. The Anglo-Persian Oil Company were willing in 1912 to lease an area, but no progress was made before the war. During the war the Company's trade expanded, and the offer of the area selected for a depôt was withdrawn; the lighting service was, however, allowed to remain at Abadan temporarily. In 1921 the Government of India proposed to unite with the Basra Port authorities in a joint depôt at Fao. This was sanctioned in 1922.

14. In 1923 the lighthouse tender *Nearchus* was declared unfit for service, and her sale was authorised in 1924. She was replaced by the new R.I.M.S. *Lawrence*, which combined the duties of despatch vessel and tender.



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(72)

15. The last five years have been too much taken up with administrative and financial readjustments to permit of any extensive developments in the service. The most pressing needs at the moment, however, are said to be the replacement of the light vessel off Kais Island and the establishment of a lighthouse at Ras-al-Hadd. The desirability of the latter has been represented on several occasions by individual merchant ships and by the Merchant Service Guild.

III.—Administration and Finance.

16. The question of raising light dues from vessels using the Gulf, to pay for the maintenance of the service, was considered before the war. But it was decided that such a course would be impossible "without the consent of the Powers whose flags are flown by the vessels navigating the Gulf, and such consent would not be forthcoming except on conditions implying that very international control which it is the aim of His Majesty's Government to exclude." The whole cost of the service (about £30,000 to £40,000 a year) was therefore borne in equal shares by Imperial and Indian revenues, all fresh expenditure exceeding £100 requiring the prior sanction of His Majesty's Government. Subject to this control, the Government of India were responsible for administration; during the period (1912-4) of reconstruction the Political Resident was ex-officio "Inspector of Lights," with the Commander of R.I.M.S. *Lawrence* as Assistant Inspector. In 1915 the inspectorship was transferred to the Director of the Royal Indian Marine, who, under the Government of India, was thenceforth responsible for the maintenance of the Service. The commander of the tender remained Assistant Inspector of Lights, and was expected to consult the Political Resident on all political matters in connection with the lights.

17. After the war, with the elimination of Turkish and German interests in the Gulf, His Majesty's Government were anxious to divest themselves of financial commitments, and in 1923 an inter-departmental conference recommended that light dues should be levied at Basra and Abadan. It was ascertained that in 1922 96 per cent. of the shipping which crossed the Shatt-el-Arab bar was British. The British shipping interests were consulted, and it was agreed that an Advisory Committee should be formed of commercial and shipping representatives to work in partnership with the Government of India in the administration of the new Lighting and Buoying Fund; the Iraq Government agreed to levy the dues, which were put into force (at the rate of 3 annas a ton, since reduced to 1½ annas a ton) on the 1st November 1925. His Majesty's Government agreed to contribute £5,000 a year for five years, subject to review at the end of that period. Admiralty tankers were to be exempted from dues. No law has been passed by the Iraq Government to provide for the levy, but it appears that the dues are satisfactorily collected at Basra and Abadan, without real legal authority, by the Port Directorate.

18. Since 1st January 1927, the Port Directorate have been employed by the Government of India as "contractors" for the Gulf lights. Instead of R.I.M.S. *Lawrence* being used as tender, *Nearchus*, which was apparently sold to the Port authorities, has returned to her old employment. The vessel flies a British flag outside Iraq territorial waters.

19. This has enabled considerable economies to be made, and the Fund is now in a comparatively prosperous state. In October 1927, full power was given to the Government of India to manage the fund entirely without reference to His Majesty's Government, under the arrangements made with the shipping interests.

IV.—Relations with Persia.

20. It may be useful for present purposes to mention briefly the main occasions during the British management of the Lighting and Buoying Service when His Majesty's Government have come into collision with the Persian Government.

(*a*) Tamb.—(See Memorandum on Tamb, &c., paras. 25 to 28 on page 101.)

(*b*) General Policy.—Early in 1913 the question arose of securing, as a condition of a certain loan to the Persian Government, a declaration



acknowledging British responsibility for lighting and buoying. All, however, that the Minister could obtain was a memorandum from the Persian Government expressing their disposition to cause lighthouses to be erected and buoys to be placed in or in the neighbourhood of Persian islands to be determined in consultation with His Majesty's Government, British personnel being employed, and a loan being raised, if necessary, from His Majesty Government, repayable by tolls on shipping. The Government of India considered that this would be a "surrender of our present position," and that it was "essential that lighting arrangements on both sides of the Gulf should be controlled by the same management." It was decided that the matter should be dropped, but that a declaration should be made that His Majesty's Government "regard themselves as possessing a prescriptive right to control lighting and buoying arrangements in the Gulf, which, should occasion arise, they would not hesitate to enforce."

Teh. tel., Mar. [illegible] 1913, P. [illegible]/13.

P. [illegible]/13.

Tel. to Tehran, April 7 1913. P. [illegible]/13.

(*c*) LARAK.—In August 1913, the Political Resident reported the alleged intention of the Persian Government to erect a light on Larak, (near Bander Abbas). "It would be an inconvenient intrusion on our scheme and opposed to our prescriptive right to control the lighting of the Gulf." The Persian Government, however, on enquiry, disclaimed any intention of the sort and said that they would certainly consult His Majesty's Government before taking such a step.

Pol. Res. to G. of I. [illegible] P. [illegible]/13.

Teh. tel., [illegible] 1913, P. [illegible].

(*d*) SHEIKH SHUAIB.—This island was one of those originally chosen for a lighthouse. It was recognised that since the island was undoubtedly Persian, permission would have to be obtained from the Persian Government to lease a site. His Majesty's Minister at Tehran was instructed to approach them in 1911, but reported that the Persian Government would only authorise the erection of a lighthouse under their own auspices. As this would undermine the British supremacy in matters of lighting and might involve financial difficulties if dues were subsequently levied, it was decided to drop the project altogether. In 1917, the matter was raised again by the Government of India, who proposed to erect a light without consulting the Persian Government; but various delays supervened and it was not till 1923 that the Government of India stated that they were anxious to proceed with the construction. They thought, however, that prior reference to the Persian Government would in present circumstances be necessary. His Majesty's Minister at Tehran reported in November 1923 that on raising the question he had been informed of the intention of the Persian Ministry of War to arrange for the erection themselves. Thus His Majesty's Government and the Government of India found themselves in exactly the same position as in 1912. Any such scheme for Persian control was strongly deprecated by the Secretary of State, though the Government of India were inclined to favour it. The Political Resident suggested an alternative light on Nabiyu Farur, but it was decided that, other objections apart, the status of the island was such that a prior reference to the Persian Government would be necessary before a light could be established. The question of the Sheikh Shuaib lighthouse was accordingly dropped once more.

F.O. Desp. to Tehran, Sept. [illegible] 1911, P. [illegible]/11.

Tel. from Viceroy, July [illegible] 1923, P. [illegible]/23.

Tel. from Viceroy, Nov. [illegible] 1923, P. [illegible]/23.

Letter from I.O. to F.O., Mar. [illegible] 1924, P. [illegible]/24.

Desp. from S. of S. to G. of I., July [illegible] 1925, P. [illegible]/25.

V.—Conclusions.

21. It appears that the lighting and buoying of the Gulf has been efficiently carried out since the assumption of responsibility by the Government of India, and it has been almost entirely to British activity that the larger vessels using the Gulf (of which the overwhelming majority are British) are indebted for the existing aids to navigation.

22. The Persian Government has never been in a position to maintain an effective service and has never played any constructive part. The proposals for Persian construction at Sheikh Shuaib and in the Gulf generally (see IV (*b*) and (*d*)) have been based on the employment of British personnel and British money.

23. In the Memorandum of the 1st March 1922 to the United States Government the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs said :—" The Persian Gulf has for more than a century been the scene of active British influence

Letter from I.O. to F.O., Aug. [illegible] 1922, P. [illegible]/22.



and a predominant British trade. Piracy has been suppressed, the slave trade has been abolished, the waters have been lighted and buoyed and order has been preserved by the exertions of Great Britain."

24. So far as lighting and buoying is concerned, it has always been the aim of His Majesty's Government to maintain their supremacy against foreign encroachment, and it is on the efficiency of the service and the lack of alternative organisation, together with the desirability of unified control, that the strongest arguments for the continuance of the present arrangements can be based.

25. The main avenues for possible encroachment by the Persian Government appear to be (*a*) the Shatt-el-Arab and Abadan, (*b*) the places such as Bushire, Henjam, Sheikh Shuaib, &c., on the Persian side of the Gulf, (*c*) the islands and ports on the Arabian side to which Persia lays claim, or the status of which is indeterminate (see Memorandum on Status of certain Groups of Islands, on page 105).

26. The Political Resident in the Gulf has reported that the subject is one in which the Persian authorities have recently shown interest, and that they have spoken to him on the subject of the buoys at Bushire. He adds—

> "The latter [the Bushire buoys] might be within the power of control of the Italian officer who is to be in charge of their new Preventive Service Launch, but the main question of lighting and buoying is beyond their capacity, and they could probably not pay for, nor would they efficiently keep up, a lightship such as that at Kais island. It is quite certain that we could not willingly leave our shipping to be dependent upon the vagaries of a Persian system of lighthouses. The danger would be too great, and the Persian has got to show greater capacity for organisation and maintenance before we could agree to such a proposal."

Letter 1714 from Pol. Res. to G. of I. July 21 1926, P. 1462.

Views of the Government of India.

27. The Government of India have indicated that in their view retention by His Majesty's Government of responsibility for the lighting and buoying of the Gulf is indispensable. They add*: "Present position is, of course, open to attack by Persia from two points of view. Firstly, many lights and buoys which we maintain lie in limits unquestionably Persian, like Bushire, Jask, Bundar Abbas, Kishm, Henjam, Qais. Secondly, our service is financed by dues collected from vessels (other than Government vessels and local sailing craft) entering not only Basrah but Abadan, which is Persian territory, though anchorage is technically Iraqian. It would, therefore, be not surprising if Persia discarded her passive attitude of acquiescence for active endeavour to oust us out of all control in Persian waters. Yet, for the reasons discussed in Inter-departmental Conference in 1923, we must strenuously resist any interference with essentials of the *status quo*. We should, of course, make every effort to satisfy Persian susceptibilities, *e.g.* by conceding the flying of a Persian flag on the Qais lightship . . . Persian upkeep of at any rate unlit Bushire buoys, vide Resident's despatch of 21st July, No. 275 S., and nominal Persian control of services in Persian waters elsewhere, and by admitting Persian representation (e.g. Consul) on our Bombay Advisory Committee, and perhaps (but this is beyond our own sphere) on Basrah Port Trust. Establishment of direct Persian management, however, would be out of the question at present. It is wholly beyond her powers and to admit it would endanger shipping in the Gulf. If Persia remains obdurate, we feel that she should, in the last resort, be told that we must refer the matter to the League of Nations as one affecting the efficiency of a service which Persia's impotence has forced us in the past to build up laboriously and at great expense, and still forces us to maintain in the interests of safety of shipping of all nations."

Tel. from Viceroy July 21 1926, P.Z. 8.

*Tel. from Viceroy 2618 S. Oct. 8 1926, P. 3472.



APPENDIX.

List of Lights, Buoys, &c., at present existing.

(supplemented by reference to the "Persian Gulf Pilot," 1927.)

So far as can be ascertained, the aids to navigation at present maintained in the Gulf are—

Lights maintained by Lighting Fund.

Five lighthouses: Muscat, Little Quoin, Tamb, Jask, Henjam (a white iron pillar on Ras-al-Mashin).

Five light buoys: Bahrein (two), Bushire (two), Kishm island (one). Also two spare gas buoys.

Two lightvessels: outside Shatt-el-Arab and off Kais island.

(The Beacon, with light, on Ras-al-Arz, Koweit, is apparently visited at intervals.)

Lights maintained by Indo-European Telegraph Department on their buildings.

Chahbar and Henjam (cost debited to Lighting Fund).

Numerous lights are also exhibited from other buildings, e.g. on the British Residencies at Bushire and Koweit, the Consulate at Muscat, the Customs building at Fao, &c.

Unlit buoys.

The following is an approximate list of the main buoys, compiled from the "Persian Gulf Pilot."

Bander Abbas, Bushire, Jask, Henjam (Ras Khargu), Koweit (three).

Beacons.

Persian side: Henjam (Ras-al-Mashin), Basidu, Jask.

Arab side: Koweit (Ras-al-Arz), Auhah island, Umm-an-Namil, Kubbar island (all near Koweit), Farsi, Arabi, and Harkus islands (between Koweit and Bahrain), Bahrain (Ras Zarwan), Khor Kaliya and Ras Tanurah (the latter erected by Emir of Al Katif), near Bahrain, and Doha, on the El Katr coast.

Most of these were erected by the Government of India. No specific arrangements appear to have been made for the upkeep of the beacons generally, which in several cases are adjacent to lighthouses.

Shatt-el-Arab.

Maintained by Basra Port Directorate.

One lightvessel, about 10 unlit buoys, and about 20 lighted buoys, are mentioned in the "Persian Gulf Pilot" corrected to 1927, together with numerous beacons.



Quarantine Control in the Persian Gulf.

(Communicated by India Office and revised to 9th August 1928.)

This question has now been disposed of, at any rate temporarily, by the decision of His Majesty's Government to acquiesce, subject to certain provisos, in the immediate transfer of control to the Persian Government, such transfer taking effect on 28th July. Should it, however, prove that Persia is incompetent adequately to discharge her international obligations, the position will call for further consideration.

The Memorandum now attached describes in some detail the developments leading up to the surrender of control by His Majesty's Government.

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1. Under arrangements dating from 1864 and confirmed and modified in 1896 on the occasion of an epidemic in the Gulf, quarantine arrangements are in the hands of British medical officers lent by the Government of India from the Indian Medical Service, &c. Since 1896 the pay and allowance of the Quarantine Medical Officers at Bunder Abbas, Lingah and Mohammerah, and the pay of the quarantine establishments and contingent expenditure at Lingah, Bunder Abbas, Mohammerah, Bushire and Jask, have been borne by the Persian Government. The Chief Quarantine Medical Officer reported in 1927 that expenditure on these ports averaged krans 2,20,000 per annum, but that, the Persian Government providing a sum of approximately krans 1,80,000 annually to meet this, there was invariably a claim for arrears. The remaining expenditure on the service and the personnel by which it is manned (allowances to Chief Quarantine Medical Officer, to Senior Assistant Surgeon, Bushire, and to Assistant Surgeon, Jask; pay and allowances of junior Assistant Surgeon, Bushire; total in 1927, Rs. 12,000 per annum) is equally divided between Imperial and Indian revenues. The Persian Government were, however, informed in 1926 that His Majesty's Government would not be prepared to sanction further capital expenditure in connection with installations or expenses of maintenance. The Chief Quarantine Officer in the Gulf has in the past reported to the Sanitary Council in Teheran, which contains a British member.

Teh. Desp. 469, Sept. 24 1927.

F.O. to I.O., Mar. 3 1926, P. 792/26.

2. At the International Sanitary Conference in Paris, the meetings of which concluded in June 1926, the Persian representative endeavoured, unsuccessfully, to secure recognition of the fact that Persia was now fully competent to administer the sanitary services in her ports without foreign intervention. Having failed to secure his object, and having refused to consider a compromise under which Article 90 of the Convention (which replaces Article 83 of the Convention of 1912, and under which the existing condition of affairs is regulated) should be replaced by an Article stating that the sanitary régime in Persian ports would be determined by subsequent negotiations between the Persian Government and His Majesty's Government, he put in a reservation as regards Article 90. To this the representatives of His Majesty's Government and the Government of India replied by a counter-reservation saving the *status quo*, pending the conclusion of an agreement on the subject between His Majesty's Government and Persia, and both reservations were consigned to the record of the proceedings.

F.O. to I.O., June 26 1926, E. 3613/[illegible], P. 2380/26.

3. In January of the following year* the Persian Government raised the question of transfer to Persian medical officers of the quarantine service in the south with the Minister in Teheran, who replied in the terms of the reservation of June 1926. In April 1927† the Assistant to the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf agreed, without authority, to the exercise by the Persian Government of what was described as "a nominal control" over the quarantine arrangements carried out in the Gulf by our officers. His action was disavowed, the Resident taking the line, when opportunity offered, that the question was one which must be raised in Teheran through the ordinary diplomatic channels, but the error had been made and the Persian Government did not fail to take advantage of it.

* Teh. Desp. 28, Jan. 13 1927, P. 838/27.

† Letter 1315 from Pol. Res. to G. of I., April 30 1927, P. [illegible]/27.

4. In July of 1927‡ Sir Robert Clive reported that the Persian Director of Health had noted in the minutes of the Sanitary Council a statement that

‡ Teh. tel. to F.O. 232, July 21 1927, P. 3652/27.



the Sanitary Director of the South had been appointed Chief of Quarantine of the South and that the Chief Quarantine Medical Officer had been instructed to transmit his reports in future to his new Chief. At the same time in the light of the situation caused by the cholera outbreak at Abadan and Mohammerah it was agreed by the Sanitary Council, the Legation Doctor acquiescing, that the senior Health Officer of the South (the reference being to the Persian) should decide which Persian ports should remain open, all others being closed and that, further, Persian and English doctors should be asked to work together. On the instructions of the Minister a letter was sent to the President of the Council by the Legation Doctor to say that it was presumed that the Persian Health Officer would only make recommendations after consultation with and in agreement with the Chief Quarantine Officer.*

Teh. tel. to F.O. 136, July 27 1927, P. 3754.

* P. 3754/27.

5. Meanwhile, the Persian Government had intimated unofficially through the Director-General of Health that their position *vis-à-vis* the Russian Medical Officers in the Persian Caspian ports, who had been deprived of powers of interference in quarantine, was difficult in view of the state of affairs in the Persian Gulf; that they in no way desired there to replace at present the existing British Medical Officers by Persians since it would be some time before suitable Persian doctors would be available and even when they did become available they would be installed only very carefully, and that they desired that the service should remain as it was, but under the supervision and direction of the Persian Health Department. Sir Robert Clive remarked that could we really rely on the Persian Government confining themselves to calling for and receiving quarantine reports and regularly contracting for the service of British quarantine officers in the Gulf for a number of years and not unduly interfering in the present system, he was of opinion that much might be gained by regularising the service on some such basis. The Foreign Office suggested that the Minister might be authorised to take action on these lines and the Government of India, whose views were accepted by the Secretary of State for India, reluctantly agreed, remarking that the best course apparently was to aim at tempering full nominal control by Persia with as effective safeguards as possible against executive control. They suggested that stress might be laid on our ability, if not unduly interfered with, to work the system for the present more cheaply than they could and on the necessity of avoiding premature innovations which might have the effect of bringing the present excellent arrangements into serious discredit with the Office International.† Sir Robert Clive was accordingly authorised‡ to endeavour to arrange with the Persian Government on the lines suggested by him. (It may be noted that at this stage, the Ministry of Health in a letter of 11th August 1927,§ represented the undesirability, in view of the existence of the cholera epidemic at Abadan, of taking any action at the present juncture likely to impair the authority of the British Quarantine Officers in the Gulf Ports in the administration and execution of sanitary measures, and referred to the reservation on the subject of control registered by the British representatives at the Sanitary Conference in 1926).

Teh. Desp. 272, June 7 1927, P. 3390/27.

F.O. to I.O., July 25 1927, P. 3652/27.

Tel. from Viceroy to S. of S. 1931, July 29 1927; I.O. to F.O., Aug. 5 1927, P. 3756.

† P. 3786/27.

‡ F.O. tel. to Teh. 100, Aug. 8 1927, P. 3813/27

§ P. 4067.

6. Sir Robert Clive before raising the matter with the Persian Government took the opinion of the Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, suggesting that the objects to be secured appeared, on a preliminary examination, to be the following:—

(*a*) The retention so far as possible, by the British Quarantine Officers of the Indian Medical Service in as unhampered a form as possible of the real executive authority in quarantine matters.

(*b*) The regularisation if possible of the whole basis of the service of the British Quarantine Officers under the Persian Government so as to give the maximum possible assurance that the Persian Government would regularly meet the amounts due on their salaries and on the disputed leave salary and pension contributions.

(*c*) That there should be no question of interference by the Persian Government with the appointments, &c., of individual British Quarantine Officers.

Teh. Desp. 65, Aug. 19 1927, to Pol. Res., P. 4258/27.

Colonel Haworth replied on 12th September 1927, agreeing, as did the Chief Quarantine Medical Officer, with the Minister's conclusions. He suggested, however, that it was desirable that the Chief Quarantine Medical

Encl. in Teh. Desp. to F.O. 468, Sept. 24 1927, P. 5060/27.



Officer should be placed, for quarantine matters only, in a position of direct subordination to the Sanitary Council at Teheran, not to the Persian Director of Southern Health at Shiraz, an arrangement which would, he thought, result in preserving real executive authority in quarantine for the Chief Quarantine Medical Officer. Sir R. Clive, who agreed that this latter object would probably be attained if subordination to the Central Health authorities at Teheran (not necessarily to the Sanitary Council) could be secured, proposed (P. 5030) to discuss the question informally when opportunity offered with the head of the Department of Public Health, and in the light of such discussion to consider further the course to be followed.

7. It was decided at the beginning of 1928 that further consideration of the quarantine question should be left over until the treaty negotiations then being undertaken with Persia had further advanced. On 18th January, the Minister reported, however,* that the Budget Commission had recommended that provision for the payment of British quarantine medical officers in the Gulf should be struck out of this year's budget. The Head of the National Health Department had himself raised the question with the Oriental Secretary, assuring him that this was entirely contrary to his wishes, and that he proposed to fight it, and had enquired on what lines His Majesty's Government were ready to regularise the position of the Indian quarantine officers, and how long they expected the Persian Government to retain their services, as by law the Majlis would have to pass their contracts. The Oriental Secretary replied on the general lines set out in para. 6 above, and suggested that a request should be made for seven-year contracts.

Tel. Desp. 388, Nov. 29 1927, P. 40/28.

* Tel. tel. 18, P. 384/28.

8. A month later, however,† the Budget Commission informed the Director-General of Health that immediate steps must be taken to replace the British medical officers by the end of the present financial year, while the Persian Cabinet were also reported to be opposed to their continued employment. The Director-General professed to hope to satisfy the Commission by retaining only one or two British doctors. He stated that he was convinced that some concession must be made, and added that he had sufficient competent Persians to take over all the posts concerned. The Foreign Office took the line, with which the India Office agreed, that if the Persian Government and the Persian Parliament were unwilling any longer to sanction the employment of all the British doctors at present employed in the Gulf ports, it would be difficult for His Majesty's Government to insist on their doing so, particularly in those posts in which the salaries of the officers had hitherto been paid by Persia.‡ In the light of the views of the Government of India and the Political Resident, the Secretary of State for India agreed, moreover, that the ideal was that the present system should be retained both at Mohammerah and at Bushire, Lingah and Bandar Abbas being given up when necessary, but that, "from every point of view," the maintenance of a British doctor at Mohammerah was more essential than even at Bushire, although at the latter place, as our headquarters in the Persian Gulf, it was more important from the point of view of prestige.

† Tel. tel. 22, Feb. 20, P. 1082/28.

‡ F.O. letter to I.O., Mar. 2 1928, P. 1062; I.O. to F.O., Mar. 13 1928, P. 1290.

9. Matters reached a new stage with the conclusion of the first stage of the general negotiations with Persia in April. It will be remembered that it was then decided that an immediate decision should be taken on tariff autonomy, the capitulations and certain subsidiary questions, but that the Persian Gulf and matters affecting it should be left over for further discussion in the autumn, the Minister of Court promising that in the meantime "no action would be taken to alter the existing state of things." On the question of quarantine being raised with him in this connection, Teymourtache said, however, that in this matter the Budget Commission of Majlis had cut out the proposed grant for the payment of English doctors, and he was powerless. On Sir R. Clive urging that the matter was of great interest to the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, the Minister of Court replied that the Persian quarantine officer at Mohammerah would be instructed to co-operate with the health officers of the Anglo-Persian Oil Company, and that nothing would be done in such matters against the interests of the Company.§

§ Teh. tel. 118, April 24 1928.

10. But on the 10th May Sir Robert Clive informed the Foreign Office that a telegram had been received from Colonel Haworth to the effect that a Persian



doctor was reported to be on his way to Mohammerah to relieve Assistant-Surgeon Lincoln as quarantine officer. This doctor had apparently left *via* Bushire on the 5th May. On representations being made to the Minister of Court, stressing the extreme lack of courtesy to the Government of India and to the Vice-Consul at Mohammerah (who is also the quarantine officer) in despatching a Persian doctor without any notification to them, Teymourtache promised that instructions should be given that the Persian doctor should not at once require Dr. Lincoln to evacuate his house, and that he would consider the sending of an official letter expressing thanks for the services in the past of Indian medical officers in the Gulf, and notifying the changed situation which had arisen from the refusal of the Majlis to vote money for foreign doctors, and the consequent decision of the Persian Government to appoint Persian doctors. The Minister added that the Persian doctor had categorical instructions to work in co-operation with the Anglo-Persian Oil Company.* On 4th May Sir R. Clive wrote to Teymourtache, forwarding a memorandum on the question and stating that he had telegraphed to Bushire, proposing that the necessary instructions should be sent to Dr. Lincoln to collaborate with the Persian doctor despatched to Mohammerah by the Central Government.

* Tel. tel. 281, May 10 1928, P. 2800/28.

Tel. Desp. 331, May 21 1928, P. 3019/28.

11. The Government of India, in their telegrams of 12th May, No. 976-S (P. 2403), and 21st May, No. 1030-S, protested vigorously against the action of the Persian Government as being objectionable not only as likely to lead to quarantine inefficiency (responsibility for which, under the resolutions of the International Sanitary Conference of 1926, definitely rested with India), but as another deliberate blow at British prestige in South Persia and the Gulf. They suggested that strong representations, accompanied by a threat to dismantle the Dunlap Railway, should be made to the Persian Government, and (on the assumption that finance was one of the chief difficulties), separately offered, in view of the interest of India in the question, to finance the quarantine themselves for, say, six months, to enable Persia to secure the foreign medical expert for whose recruitment as technical Counsellor to the National Health Department, the Majlis had given authority on the 29th April, and to provide for the satisfactory transfer of quarantine arrangements from the Indian to the Persian medical officers. They suggested, too, that the Persian medical officer during the transitional period might usefully be attached to the Indian doctor to learn his work.

12. Meanwhile, however, Sir Robert Clive had reported that the Minister of Court had definitely agreed to send an official Note on the lines referred to in para. 10 above, and to give definite instructions to the Persian doctors at Bushire and Mohammerah to consult and profit by the experience of the English quarantine doctors, in case the latter remained, and that Teymourtache had added that he had already taken steps to prevent the *status quo* in the Gulf being upset, but that this question of doctors depended on the recent vote of the Majlis, and had nothing to do with his promise.† In a despatch dated the 4th May, No. 206, Sir R. Clive further stated that it was perfectly clear that the Persians had made up their minds to terminate the employment of the British quarantine officers. "Teymourtache stated emphatically that this was not part of an anti-British policy. The Persian Government had no intention or desire to contravene our rights, but, as I was aware, it was now the established policy of the Persian Government not to engage in their service citizens of limitrophe countries. No foreigner could now be engaged in any capacity by the Persian Government without his contract first being approved by the Majlis. Although he personally recognised the good work done by British quarantine doctors in the past, it would be useless to submit to the Majlis contracts for the future employment of British doctors, as the Majlis would never approve such contracts." Sir Robert Clive, in the despatch in question, had recommended that His Majesty's Government should acquiesce, in the circumstances, in the Persian assurance that Persian quarantine doctors at Abadan and Mohammerah would have standing instructions to work in co-operation with the Anglo-Persian Oil Company's medical officer, and that the matter should immediately be taken up with the Minister of Court, should the Company have reason later to believe that the Persian doctors there had not received

† Tel. tel. 281, May 17 1928, P. 2845.



76

such instructions, or were not acting in accordance with them. On the 21st May* he added that, should the promised instructions not be given, and this lead to inefficiency this summer, there would then be a strong case for submission of the question to the International Sanitary Council, that the Anglo-Persian Oil Company had offered for one year to pay Dr. Lincoln an additional sum equal to what he would lose as quarantine officer on the understanding that his Persian successor would be bound to co-operate in all quarantine matters with the Company's medical officer, that, thanks to their helpful attitude, no difficulty need therefore be anticipated at Mohammerah, and that it was to be hoped that the British quarantine medical officer at Bushire, by maintaining tactful relations with the Persian doctor there, would in fact be able to see the quarantine service satisfactorily maintained.

* Tel. [illegible], P. [illegible]; Tel. Desp. [illegible], May [illegible] 1928, P. [illegible].

13. In the light of the developments set out above, the Foreign Office on the 11th June, officially asked the concurrence of the India Office in the acceptance of the Minister's recommendations, forwarding at the same time a despatch from the Minister† in which Sir Robert Clive pointed out that Persia was entirely within her sovereign rights in sending her own doctors to the Gulf, that she was under no contract to the Government of India to maintain a British-controlled quarantine service, that she was not bound by any promise made at the last International Quarantine Conference not to do what she had done, and that, in the circumstances, the only possible policy was to minimise as far as possible any ill effects on our prestige in the Gulf by the Persian action, and to endeavour to induce the Persians to continue to avail themselves of the wide experience and knowledge of the British quarantine officers, with a view to maintaining an efficient quarantine service.

P. [illegible]/28.
† No. [illegible], May 21 1928.

14. At this stage the matter rested until July 1928, action being postponed by the India Office pending a decision on the proposal to set up a Sub-Committee of the Committee of Imperial Defence on the position of His Majesty's Government in the Gulf generally, and the subjects to be considered by that Sub-Committee.

15. On 13th July, however, the Chargé d'Affaires at Teheran‡ reported that the Minister of Court had spoken to him with unusual vehemence on the quarantine question, stating that Persia must be allowed to take over at all costs and even hinting at the use of force. It transpired that the Persian attitude was to some extent due to the fact that Dr. Lincoln, the British quarantine officer at Mohammerah, had not yet been authorised by the chief quarantine medical officer, acting under the orders of the Government of India, to hand over control of his Persian successor and that effect had thus not yet been given to the arrangement agreed in May between the Minister of Court and Sir R. Clive.

‡ Tel. [illegible], July 13 1928, P. [illegible]/28.
Tel. [illegible] to F.O. [illegible], July 14 1928, P. [illegible]/28.

16. On 18th July the Foreign Office wrote to the India Office§ urging their concurrence in regularisation of the position at an early date on the lines referred to in para. 12 above, and expressing the view that the delay which had taken place in giving effect to the arrangements made in May with the Minister of Court was regrettable. On the same date the Government of India telegraphed that three Persian doctors had arrived in Bushire, one to take over the quarantine at Bushire, one for duty at Lingah, while the third expected early orders for Jask and a fourth was reported to be proceeding to Bunder Abbas. The Government of India, while strongly reiterating their previous protests against the relinquishment of control by His Majesty's Government, stated that they were ready to issue immediate instructions for the handing over of charge to the Persian doctors should His Majesty's Government consider that this was necessitated by the discussions which had taken place at Teheran, or by consideration of the wider interests involved. The Indian officers would be instructed to afford all possible assistance to their successors. The Government of India added that the Chargé d'Affaires would no doubt be able to arrange that the latter should be instructed to act in close consultation with the outgoing officers, who could be retained for say six months to see that the quarantine regulations were properly carried out and to give the new régime a fair start.

§ P. [illegible].



"ملخص تاريخي للأحداث في أراضي الإمبراطورية العثمانية، فارس وشبه الجزيرة العربية التي تؤثر على الموقف البريطاني في الخليج الفارسي، ١٩٠٧-١٩٢٨" [٧٦ظ] (١٨٨/١٥٩)

P. [illegible]/28.

17. On 21st July the Secretary of State for India, in the light of the above developments, informed the Foreign Office that while entirely in agreement with the representations of the Government of India, he no longer felt able to resist the Foreign Office demand that matters should be regularised on the lines suggested by Sir R. Clive, and that he was prepared accordingly to agree to the transfer to Persia of quarantine control in the Gulf, on the understanding that satisfactory arrangements would be made for handing over (a matter of importance to India in view of her responsibility under the International Sanitary Convention) and that all possible steps would be taken to secure that so long as British doctors remained in the posts affected they should be in a position to co-operate effectively with their Persian successors, and the maximum degree of effective control by British medical staff retained. The Chargé d'Affaires at Teheran was authorised* by the Foreign Office on 25th July to inform the Persian Government accordingly, and under the orders of the Government of India, quarantine charge was handed over to Persia by the Chief Quarantine Medical Officer on 28th July 1928.†

* F.O. tel. [illegible], P. [illegible]

† Tel. from Viceroy to S. of S., July 27, 1928, P. [illegible]



"ملخص تاريخي للأحداث في أراضي الإمبراطورية العثمانية، فارس وشبه الجزيرة العربية التي تؤثر على الموقف البريطاني في الخليج الفارسي، ١٩٠٧-١٩٢٨" [٧٧و] (١٨٨/١٦٠)

Arms Traffic in the Persian Gulf, 1908-1928.

(Communicated by India Office and revised to 8th October 1928.)

Introductory.

1. The Foreign Office (Supplementary) Memorandum of 1908 deals with the earlier history of the arms traffic in the Persian Gulf. At the date of that Memorandum the States, other than Muscat, bordering on the Gulf, had declared the trade illegal, or had agreed with His Majesty's Government for its suppression. The absence of any restrictions on the import and export of arms from Muscat, which was prevented from imposing restrictions by its treaties with foreign Powers, had, however, led to the concentration of the traffic in that State, and so to a situation which the Government of India and His Majesty's Government, vitally interested in checking the flow of modern arms of precision to Afghanistan and the North-West Frontier of India, regarded with the utmost gravity.

2. The period now under review is marked by the conclusion of arrangements which have effectively curbed the arms traffic in Muscat and by the reduction to insignificant dimensions of that traffic in the Gulf as a whole. The present Memorandum proposes briefly to set out the treaty engagements and agreements concluded on the subject between His Majesty's Government and the States bordering on the Gulf, and, after a reference to the Arms Traffic Conventions of 1919 and 1925, to refer to the more important developments in the Gulf between 1908 and 1928 in connection with the suppression of the trade in arms.

Treaty Engagements, &c., of States bordering on the Persian Gulf.

3. With the exception of the King of the Hejaz and Nejd, the rulers whose States border on the Persian Gulf at the present date are bound by treaty or agreement to prohibit and suppress the arms traffic in their territories. The import of arms into **Persia** was prohibited by the Shah in 1881, and again in 1900. In 1897 Her Majesty's Government secured from the Persian Government a *firman*, under which the Shah empowered Her Majesty's ships in the Persian Gulf to examine and search all merchant vessels in the Persian Gulf and confiscate and hand over to the Persian Government all prohibited arms found on board. This *firman* remains in force.

On the Arab littoral of the Gulf, the Sheikh of **Bahrein** agreed in 1898 to prohibit the traffic in arms in Bahrein territory; the Sheikh of **Koweit** gave a similar undertaking in 1900, as did the **Trucial Chiefs** in 1902. The import of arms into **Turkey** (and so, up to 1914, into **El Hasa** and **El Katr**) was prohibited in 1862; and the Sheikh of El Katr, under his treaty with His Majesty's Government of 3rd November 1916, undertook the same obligations in the matter as the other Trucial Chiefs. By a Proclamation of 1898, the Sultan of **Muscat**, who in 1881 had prohibited the import of arms at Gwadur, his dependency on the Makran coast, authorised British and Persian war vessels to search British, Muscat, or Persian vessels for arms in Muscat waters, as well as Muscat vessels in Indian and Persian waters, and to confiscate arms and ammunition intended for Indian or Persian ports. In 1905 he empowered British (and Italian) vessels to search Muscat vessels suspected of carrying arms on the high seas; and in 1912 an agreement was reached with His Highness by His Majesty's Government for the establishment in his State of a warehouse regime, the result of which has been to dispose of the Muscat arms traffic as a serious issue. Ibn Saud alone of the rulers whose States border on the Gulf remains unfettered by any agreement in the matter.

The Arms Traffic Conventions of 1919 and 1925.

4. Save in the case of the Sheikh of El Katr, the engagements referred to in the preceding paragraph had been concluded before the European



War. One effect of the War was to release a very large quantity of arms and ammunition, not least in territories bordering on the Persian Gulf, and from 1917 onwards the action to be taken to deal with the situation which was regarded as likely to result was the subject of anxious consideration by His Majesty's Government. It is unnecessary in the present Memorandum, which is directed solely to the local question of the situation in the Persian Gulf, to enter into any detailed account of the discussions which took place. Suffice it to say that consequent on them the matter was taken up and pressed by His Majesty's Government on the conclusion of the War, and that, on 20th September 1919, an Arms Traffic Convention was approved and signed at St. Germain-en-Laye by the Allied Powers other than the United States of America, and by a number of the Powers associated with them.

5. The Convention in question declared "Persia, Gwadur, the Arabian Peninsula, and such continental parts of Asia as were included in the Turkish Empire on 4th August 1914," together with "a maritime zone including . . . the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman . . ." prohibited areas, within which the High Contracting Parties undertook to prohibit, save under most stringent restrictions, the importation (and, in the case of the maritime zone, the transportation) of specified arms and ammunition. It proved impracticable, however, to secure the general ratification of the Convention; in 1923 the United States of America definitely declared their inability to accede to its provisions, and it was abandoned.

6. But the question was too important to be allowed to drop, and in September 1923 the Temporary Commission on Armaments was invited by the League of Nations to examine it further and to consider the preparation of an International Convention likely to meet with general acceptance. The result of the deliberations of this body was the holding at Geneva in 1925 of an Arms Traffic Conference which drew up a revised Convention. The new Convention, which was based, in general, on the abortive Convention of 1919, followed that Convention in declaring the Arabian Peninsula, the Muscat dependency of Gwadur on the Persian littoral of the Gulf, and a maritime zone to include the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman, and to be bounded by a line drawn from and following the latitude of Cape Guardafui to the point of intersection with longitude 57° East of Greenwich, and proceeding thence direct to the eastern frontier of Gwadur, "a special zone" (or prohibited area) for the purpose of the arms traffic. It likewise followed the Convention of 1919 in providing that within the special zones no "native vessel" of less than 500 tons net tonnage should be allowed to ship, discharge, or tranship specified arms, ammunition and implements of war. The definition of a native vessel was one either owned, fitted out or commanded by a native of any country bordering on the Indian Ocean west of the meridian 95° East of Greenwich and north of the parallel of 11° South longitude, the Red Sea, the Persian Gulf or the Gulf of Oman, if at least half the crew are natives of such countries. The Convention as originally drafted had likewise followed the Convention of 1919 in declaring Persia a special zone.

7. The strongest exception was taken by the Persian delegates at the League to the last-mentioned proposal, and, in deference to their representations, it was decided that Persia should no longer be classified as a prohibited or special area. Persian agreement to the inclusion of the Persian Gulf and the Sea of Oman in the "special" maritime zone was secured only with the greatest difficulty, and consequent on earnest representations at Teheran by His Majesty's Government, while it proved impossible to secure Persian concurrence in the inclusion of Persian vessels in the category of native craft (it may be remarked that a specific reservation on this last point was again made by Persia in connection with Article 3 of the League of Nations Slavery Convention on the occasion of the signature of that Convention (*ad referendum*) by her representative at Geneva in September 1926). In the event the Convention, which has not yet been ratified by any of the principal arms-producing countries, was not signed by Persia. For practical purposes, therefore, while His Majesty's Government endeavour, in dealing with the arms trade, to be guided so far as possible by the spirit of



78

the Convention, the binding instruments, so far as the Persian Gulf is concerned, are the treaty engagements and other Agreements referred to in para. 3 above.

Arms Traffic in the Gulf, 1908–1928.

(a) 1908–1919.

8. The question of most importance during this period is the suppression, in 1912, of the arms traffic from Muscat. The history of this question, and of the successful efforts made by His Majesty's Government to establish control over the traffic, is given in paras. 7 to 17 of the Memorandum on Muscat on page 44, and it is not proposed to deal with it in detail here. Suffice it to say that, after lengthy negotiation, an arrangement was reached with the Sultan in May 1912, under which His Highness, in return for certain considerations, and for the payment of certain compensation, agreed to establish in his State a bonded warehouse under efficient control, to be in charge of a trustworthy person from among his subjects, in which all arms and ammunition should be deposited on importation. Issues from the warehouse were to be regulated by licences prepared by the Superintendent and countersigned by the Sultan personally, and such licences were to be issued only to individual purchasers or their authorised agents, subject to satisfactory proof that the issue involved was free from justifiable objection, and were not to be issuable to traders. After long diplomatic discussions, the regulations in question were recognised by the French Government in February 1914, and from that date the arms traffic in Muscat—save possibly in certain areas of the Batineh coast, on which the Sultan's writ does not run—may be regarded as under effective control.

9. The closing of Muscat to the arms traffic disposed of the most serious problem. But the conquest of Hasa in 1913 by Ibn Saud, and the reduction of effective Turkish authority in the peninsula of El Katr, which from 1910–11, consequent on the action taken by His Majesty's Government to prevent smuggling from the Muscat coast to Persian Makran, had become an important centre for the arms traffic, afforded new openings to the trade which called for the attention of His Majesty's Government.

10. No undertaking as regards the arms traffic was secured from Ibn Saud either in the Treaty of December 1915 or in the Treaty of Jeddah of May 1927, but the dominions of the Ruler of Nejd do not seem to have given rise to serious difficulty in this connection between 1908 and 1928. The outbreak of the war similarly reduced for the time the seriousness of the problem presented by El Katr; the Sheikh, under his Treaty of 3rd November 1916 with the Government of India, undertook the same obligations in regard to the suppression of the arms traffic as had already been undertaken in 1902 by the other Trucial Chiefs, and no incident of importance occurred in connection with the trade during the remaining years of the European War.

(b) 1919–1928.

11. The Naval authorities in the Persian Gulf reported in December 1920 that the present situation of the arms traffic indicated that, failing effective action to suppress the trade, a recrudescence of what took place before the war was probable. The chief centre of the traffic was reported to be Koweit, El Katr and the Trucial Sheikhdom of Dabai being minor centres; the chief markets were southern Persia and Mesopotamia, with a continuous but small infiltration of arms into Persian Baluchistan; and the line followed by the traffic was principally across the Gulf to the south Persian coast near Lingah.

C. in C., E. Indies, to Adm., Jan. 29 1921, P. 1452.

12. His Majesty's Government took a serious view of the danger of any revival of the trade, and as a result a conference of the interested authorities was held in Karachi in August 1921. The conclusions reached by the conference were that, while available figures showed no immediate marked increase in the traffic, traders were watching their opportunity; that the large collection of arms now in Arabia was a source of future potential danger; and that it was thanks solely to the activity of His Majesty's ships, which were closely watching the traffic and periodically searching dhows, that there had not been any material increase in the traffic.

H.C. Iraq to C.O., Aug. 29 1923, P. 3604.

Tel. from Viceroy to S. of S. for I., Oct. 27 1921, P. 4872.



"ملخص تاريخي للأحداث في أراضي الإمبراطورية العثمانية، فارس وشبه الجزيرة العربية التي تؤثر على الموقف البريطاني في الخليج الفارسي، ١٩٠٧-١٩٢٨" [‎٧٨ظ] (١٨٨/١٦٣)

13. To deal with the matter the Conference recommended the maintenance of the existing naval forces in the Gulf; the application of pressure to the local Sheikhs; the grant of authority immediately to establish a motor boat coastal patrol should an increase of the traffic take place; the establishment of a wireless installation at Koweit; and the making of efforts to persuade the Sheikh of Koweit to establish registration of arms on the lines accepted in Muscat in 1912.

Naval C. in C., E. Indies, to Adm., Mar 21 1921, P. [illegible]

14. The death in March 1921 of Sheikh Salim of Koweit had removed the principal figure in the arms traffic, and the succession of Sheikh Ahmad-el-Jabir afforded an opportunity to apply pressure to the Principality in the matter (cp. para. 1 of Koweit Memorandum on p. 73). In view of this, and of the finding of the Conference that the trade in arms was relatively insignificant, the Government of India and His Majesty's Government decided that the problem was not sufficiently serious to justify special expenditure on wireless or special coastal motor boats, and that existing arrangements were probably adequate to meet it.

Tel. from Pol. Res. to S. of S. for I., Mar 1 1925, P. [illegible]

Pol. Res. to G. of I., May 16 1926, P. [illegible]

Pol. Res. to G. of I., March 18 1926, P. [illegible]

I.O. to G. of I., Sept. 23 1926, P. [illegible]

15. That decision has been justified by events. The new Sheikh of Koweit has actively co-operated with His Majesty's Government in the suppression of the arms traffic since his accession in 1921; by 1925 the Political Resident was able to report (in connection with the deliberations of the Arms Traffic Conference at Geneva) that the trade, whether to Makran or to the littoral between the Shatt-al-Arab and Lingah, was relatively unimportant; in April 1926 it was decided that the maintenance of the telephone and patrol establishment instituted on the Makran coast in 1907 in connection with the abolition of the arms traffic was no longer necessary; and while in the same year the efforts of the Persian Government to disarm their subjects on the south Persian coast led to a temporary increase of smuggling from that coast to Trucial Oman (in connection with the suppression of which His Majesty's Government agreed that, provided they reported their captures, the Trucial Chiefs might be authorised to retain, for the use of their own military forces, such arms and ammunition as were seized by them), the reports of the local authorities have otherwise shown year by year a consistent decrease in the trade, to which the exhaustion of the supply of arms on the Arab coast has doubtless contributed.

Summary.

16. While a continual vigilance is necessary, the problem at the present day is one of inconsiderable dimensions, and the engagements existing between His Majesty's Government and the rulers of the Arab littoral and Persia, coupled with the presence of His Majesty's ships, are adequate, if strictly interpreted, to keep it within bounds. On the Persian littoral it is, moreover, definitely to the interest of the Persian Government that it should be reduced to the lowest possible level, but Persia is only slowly establishing her authority in Persian Baluchistan; she is for practical purposes impotent by sea; and so far as she is concerned the trade is kept under thanks to the efforts of His Majesty's Government. An international undertaking on the lines of the Arms Traffic Convention of 1925, if ratified and put into force, would afford a valuable additional obstacle to any recrudescence of the trade. But even in the absence of such an undertaking, the fact that the Convention of 1919 was signed, if not ratified, by the principal arms exporting countries other than the United States of America, has the advantage of reducing substantially the danger of obstructive action such as that taken by France in the early years of the period now under consideration in connection with the arms traffic in Muscat.



"ملخص تاريخي للأحداث في أراضي الإمبراطورية العثمانية، فارس وشبه الجزيرة العربية التي تؤثر على الموقف البريطاني في الخليج الفارسي، ١٩٠٧-١٩٢٨" [٧٩و] (١٨٨/١٦٤)

(79)

Persian Complaints of Smuggling in the Persian Gulf.

(Communicated by India Office and revised to 1st October 1928.)

1. The relevancy to the Persian attitude towards the independence of Bahrein and of the Trucial Sheikhdoms of recent Persian complaints about the prevalence of smuggling to the South Persian coast from the Arab littoral and from the Persian Gulf islands makes it desirable briefly to set out the recent history of this question, and the result of the investigation made by His Majesty's Government and the Government of India of the extent to which assistance could be given to Persia in the suppression of the contraband traffic.

2. On various occasions during the past year His Majesty's representatives at Tehran and the Political Resident have emphasised that the problem is one of very serious dimensions, and the Belgian Administrator-General of Customs informed Mr. Parr, in the summer of this year, in connection with the Tamb incident, that the Sheikhs on the Trucial coast were all associated with smuggling, and that "his people are at their wits' end how to cope with it." The serious development of the trade apparently dates from the imposition by Persia in 1925 of a monopoly tax on all consignments of tea and sugar imported from abroad. The situation is rendered difficult by the fact that the Persian Government have practically no means of coping with it on the sea, and very inadequate means for dealing with it on the coast, the corruption of the local officials being a serious factor, while the fact that the motor launches possessed by the Customs administration, although they carry an automatic gun, are not armoured, places them at a disadvantage in dealing with armed smugglers.

Teh. Desp. 187, Mar. 22 1928, P. 1978.
Teh. tel. 296, Aug. 14. P. 4908/28.
Teh. tel. 296, Aug. 8 1928, P. 4219.

3. A formal request to His Majesty's Government to assist them in suppressing smuggling on the Gulf has not so far been made by the Persian Government, and there is no special reason to suppose that such a request is likely to be made in the course of the forthcoming negotiations. Active steps, in fact, are apparently being taken by Persia to deal with the problem in other ways, and there is reason to suppose that the Persian Government contemplate the purchase of half a dozen Italian vessels, and the engagement of an Italian Naval Officer for preventive service in the Gulf. As will be seen from what follows, the matter has, however, been brought to the notice of His Majesty's representatives on various occasions, both by the Minister of Court and by the Belgian Customs officials.

4. The importance to Persia of the suppression of the traffic was mentioned to Sir Robert Clive by the Persian Minister of the Court at the beginning of the present year, in connection with the Persian claims to Bahrein, and Sir Robert Clive then suggested to His Majesty's Government that it might be possible to dispose directly of the Persian claims to the island if it was possible to meet Persia in regard to the prevention of smuggling from Bahrein to the Persian coast. On the 27th January Sir Robert Clive reported an interview with the Administrator-General of Customs, in which M. Molitor had stated that during the past year the Persian Government had been hard hit by the smuggling conducted from Koweit, Bahrein and Dubai, and that all the reports received from his agents insisted that to take effective measures for the cessation of this illicit traffic British co-operation was necessary. The only practical suggestion which the Administrator-General could make, however, was that the resident British authorities in the ports mentioned "could help a great deal by having ships' manifests inspected, and the loading of the cargoes supervised."

Teh. tel. 13, Jan. 31, P. 896/28.
Teh. Desp. 53, Jan. 27 1928, P. 879.

5. In the light of the Minister's representations, which assumed particular importance in view of the desirability of disposing of the question of Bahrein in direct negotiation with Persia rather than through the League of Nations, the question of possible action to assist the Persian Government was carefully investigated by the Admiralty and the Government of India. The results, however, were not such as to show that any effective assistance could conveniently be given to Persia, the objections to action being partly of a general political character, and partly based on grounds of practicability.



Adm. to F.O., Jan. 25, 1929, P. 409.

6. On the question of action by His Majesty's ships, the Admiralty, who drew attention to the fact that the Navy had no power to take action against persons infringing Persian smuggling laws, stated that it would be contrary to the policy hitherto pursued for the Navy to take any active steps in civil operations such as the prevention of smuggling. The only action which could, in their view, be taken without a departure from precedent would be to report cases in which smuggling appeared to be taking place which came under the notice of His Majesty's ships. They presumed that this would be unlikely to be of much assistance.

7. The matter was very carefully investigated by the Political Resident and by the Government of India. The result of its examination by Sir Lionel Haworth was to indicate that assistance to Persia was not merely politically undesirable, but unlikely to produce any result of value.

Tel. from Pol. Res. to G. of I., May 31, 1928, P. 3905.

Tel. from Viceroy to S. of S. for I., 1782 S., Sept. 4 1928, P. 4781.

8. The political objections seen by the Resident, with whose views the Government of India agreed, were that assistance could be given only by applying to the Arab rulers of the Arab littoral pressure which was not justified under the treaties between His Majesty's Government and those potentates, *vis-à-vis* whom His Majesty's Government had no sort of right to interfere; that any attempt to apply such pressure would react very adversely on the position of His Majesty's Government on the littoral in question; and that at a time when the consolidation of the British position in that area was more than ever important, the arguments for action of such a character in the interests of a Government which had done nothing to meet us on any point were not convincing.

9. Apart from the general political objections set out above, the Political Resident stated that to force the rulers affected to adopt the preventive measures which would be necessary if anything was to be achieved would be difficult at Bahrein, except at considerable expense; still more difficult at Koweit; impossible at Dubai, unless the whole policy of His Majesty's Government on the Trucial coast was altered, and completely impracticable at El Katr (close to Bahrein), except by an increase in the British Naval force in the Gulf, after the manner adopted in the case of the arms traffic, and its employment for the purpose. As for concentrating action against Bahrein, Sir Lionel Haworth reported that smuggling took place not only from Bahrein, but from the entire length of the Arab coast, and that the success of measures against the Principality would only drive the trade to other ports, over which no effective control is exercised by His Majesty's Government. A final objection to action on the part of His Majesty's Government was that the greater part of the smuggling done was done from Persia in Persian ships, and not from Bahrein; that it would be stopped to a great extent if Persia could spend money for patrolling her own coast; and that the real difficulty was that all the Persian Khans were interested in smuggling, that the Persian Customs officials were bribed, and that the country of Tangistan was out of Persian control.

Viceroy's tel. 1782 S., Sept. 4 1928, P. 4781.

10. The Government of India, in expressing their agreement with the views of the Political Resident as set out above, add that *vis-à-vis* Persia "it is not our business to control harmless exports like sugar from our Arab Protectorates, and Persia's apparent expectation to the contrary . . . has, as far as we know, no basis in international usage."

Summary.

11. It appears quite impracticable, in view of the difficulties set out by the Indian authorities, and the objections of principle seen by the Admiralty, for His Majesty's Government to lend any effective assistance to Persia in dealing with the problem of smuggling. The political objections to the application of pressure to the Arab rulers of the Gulf are very strong in present circumstances, and they are reinforced by the practical difficulties to which Sir Lionel Haworth draws attention. It is to be regretted that it is impossible to assist Persia in this matter, for an offer of help by His Majesty's Government, if indeed it was likely to produce any effective result, might form a useful lever for bargaining purposes. But the objections to action appear to be insuperable.



Oil Interests in the Persian Gulf.

Communicated by the Board of Trade and revised to 28 June 1928.

THE countries bordering the Persian Gulf in which oil is being produced are Persia and Iraq. In Persia the Anglo-Persian Oil Company have a concession which covers the whole of the country except the northern provinces. The Standard Oil have taken an interest in the latter and there have been suggestions for a concession to be worked jointly with the Anglo-Persian but nothing has been done, mainly no doubt because the district is too remote to be a profitable source of supply. In Iraq the Anglo-Persian are working a concession in the "transferred territories" on the Iraq-Persian frontier and the Turkish Petroleum Company (in which there are British, Dutch, American and French interests) have a concession for the remainder of Iraq (except the Basra Vilayet, which is not likely to be oil bearing) on terms which, after the Turkish Petroleum Company have selected certain areas for exploitation, allow other companies to bid at auctions for other areas.

There is some evidence of the existence of oil on the Arabian littoral of the Gulf, the Arab rulers of which are precluded by their treaty engagements from granting any oil concessions save with the prior approval of His Majesty's Government, but none is being worked. At one time the Standard Oil had their eyes on Koweit but apparently dropped them. The Anglo-Persian obtained permission to make a geological survey, but have not been able to negotiate a concession with the Sheikh. The "Eastern and General Syndicate" have a concession for the Bahrein Islands but so far as we know have not produced any oil. (By an undertaking of May 1914 the Sheikh of Bahrein is precluded from granting oil concessions for his territory without prior approval of His Majesty's Government.)

Thus in Persia and an adjacent part of Iraq a British oil company is firmly established, in the remaining oilfields of Iraq an international company has a concession which contains a clause purporting to maintain the "open door," after that company has selected certain areas, and on the Arabian shores of the Persian Gulf where the rulers are in treaty relations with us making their territories more or less protectorates there is at present no great interest from the point of view of oil.

We now obtain one quarter of our total imports of petroleum, crude and refined, from Persia, the bulk of this being crude oil to be refined here, while nearly the whole of our imports from other countries are refined oil. (1) As an industry affording employment in this country, oil refining is of small importance, and, in any case, it is not essential for its maintenance that the raw material should come from Persia. (2) His Majesty's Government are financially interested in the prosperity of the Anglo-Persian Company, but this is a slender basis for a Monroe doctrine. (3) Oil is an essential commodity, but Persia produces only 3 per cent. of the world's output, and we cannot say that in peace it is vital that this country should be able to draw upon Persian supplies.

The importance of the Persian Gulf from the oil point of view is therefore entirely a war question. In considering war requirements, the assumption has been that we should have control of the Persian output, and Admiralty plans would require considerable revision if this source of supply were closed to the Navy. Its importance would depend, of course, to some extent on the particular enemy and the theatre of war, and the position might be affected by the construction of a pipe line from the Iraq oilfields through Palestine to the Mediterranean, but in present circumstances the Admiralty would regard virtual control of Persia's output as of great importance in any considerable war. The closing to us of Persian sources would have reactions affecting civil supplies. The whole question of sources of oil supply in war is under consideration by a sub-committee of the C.I.D.





(31)

Note on Trade in the Persian Gulf.

(Communicated by the Board of Trade.)

Sections (*a*) and (*b*) revised to 26th July 1928.
Section (*c*) to 30th June 1928.

(*a*) General.

When the Foreign Office Memorandum of 1908 was written, British preoccupations in connection with the Persian Gulf mainly centred upon German competition and the help which this would receive from the construction of the Bagdad Railway. Russian designs, which had previously given rise to anxiety, had lost importance through the destruction of the Russian fleets in the Russo-Japanese War. In the last 20 years the situation has undergone fundamental changes, but the threats to our present well-established trade ascendancy in those regions still come from Germany and Russia, though at present they are scarcely more than perceptible. At the same time the establishment of economic autonomy in Persia and the abolition of the capitulations certainly tend to impair British influence in that country and will probably make it more difficult for Great Britain to resist favours which Persia seems apt to show to both Germany and Russia, to the former largely because of her fear or jealousy of Great Britain and to Russia because of the extent to which Persia is really at the mercy of that country. On the other hand, the extinction of Turkish sovereignty in all the regions of the Persian Gulf, and the ascendancy of British influence in Iraq, together with oil developments in that country and Persia, would seem to do more than counterbalance the changes in the other direction which have just been referred to. In view of the change in the general position of Persia referred to above, it would, it is thought, be misleading to treat the trade of the southern Persian ports such as Bushire and Bunder Abbas separately from the general trade of Persia, though it is true that that trade represents the main portion of British trade with Persia other than the oil trade from Abadan and Mohammerah. It may suffice to note here that owing largely, of course, to the oil trade in question, the share of the total trade of Persia which the British Empire participates in is now a good deal larger than it was before the war. The following are the chief features from this point of view :—

Proportion of Persian Trade as divided between the Chief Participating Countries (Exports and Imports).

	1913–4.	1923–4.
	Per cent.	Per cent.
British Empire (including India) -	21	57
Russia - - - - -	60	18
Germany - - - - -	3	1
United States - - - -	1	4
Egypt - - - - -	4	4
Turkey } Iraq } - - - -	5	{ 2 { 3

It may be added that for recent years the ports on the Persian Gulf have dealt with about half the total trade of Persia, but here again oil accounts for the greater portion of this trade, and the figures for Bushire and Lingah and Bunder Abbas alone give a total of some 250,000,000 krans out of a total of 780,000,000. These figures may be regarded as supplementary to those given in the Board of Trade Memorandum of 30th June, which gives the latest figures of Persian imports and also those for imports into Iraq. In the latter case the British proportion of the trade, including that with India, is well over 50 per cent., and in neither case has German or American trade reached at all a large proportion, though it will be noted that in the case of trade with Persia there has been a steady increase in the last three years, 1925–7, in imports into Persia. Russia, it is well known, is making strong attempts to increase her trade with Persia, which is, of course, not illegitimate having regard to her much greater pre-war trade with that country, but it seems unlikely that she will be able to oust British trade to any very serious extent. These are matters, of course, upon



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which current reports from the men on the spot are most valuable. As regards those ports in the Persian Gulf which are under British protectorate, the Foreign Office Memorandum gives particulars in the section on Commerce only in respect of Bahrein. The most recent figures for the trade of that port which the Board of Trade has been able to obtain are those in respect of the year ending 31st March 1926, and according to these figures, whereas the total imports into Bahrein in 1906 were Rs. 2,45,55,392, in 1925–6 they were valued at £1,621,869 (£1,818,012 in previous 12 months). As regards the distribution of this trade, India accounted for £1,210,223 and the Arab coast for £209,784. Neither Russia nor Germany nor the United States of America sent anything in that year, but in the previous year the imports from the United States of America and Germany were £27,295 and £386 respectively; the figure for the United Kingdom was £27,723 (year before £11,079). The exports, which consisted largely of re-exports to other places in Arabia and also in the shipment of pearls and specie to India, amounted to £1,154,777 as against Rs. 2,27,62,810 in 1906.

Shipping at Bahrein in 1925–6 was much on the same lines as in 1906. It was all under the British flag (106) except for 7 German ships and 1 Greek ship. In 1906 there were 71 British ships, 4 German and 1 American. Similar overwhelming predominance of British shipping is maintained at other ports—for example, at Bunder Abbas in 1925 all shipping was British (123) except for 6 German and 1 French vessel, whereas in 1906 there were 7 German and 10 Russian vessels calling at the port. At Lingah in 1925 all shipping was British (85) except 5 German vessels; at Bushire in 1923–4 out of 169 vessels visiting the port 164 were British, 3 Japanese and 2 Chinese as compared with a total of 168 in 1906, out of which 153 were British, 8 German and 5 Russian.

The complete development of the Persian Gulf economically must still, it seems, most probably depend upon the provision of railway communication from the West to the head of the Gulf either through the completion of the Bagdad Railway or, which from some points of view would appear to present considerable advantages, by the construction of a desert railway joining Bagdad to a Mediterranean port such as Haifa. Such a railway communication would develop a natural route for the trade between the Middle East and India on the one hand and Central Europe or Mediterranean countries on the other for relatively expensive goods which can afford to pay railway charges as compared with shipping freights. Finally, now that the political dangers associated with the Central Europe *Drang nach Osten* may presumably be regarded as largely eliminated, and that British influence in Bagdad is well established, the policy of the open door for the legitimate trade of all other countries in the Persian Gulf can presumably be allowed full application in regard to such railway developments, and also generally, it being left to British traders and to the services which already exist, for aiding them to maintain and even improve their own position and connections in those parts of the world.

(b) Koweit and Muscat.

The total trade of Koweit for the year ended 31st March 1925 was over £1,000,000, divided between £496,000 imports and £547,000 exports, of which the trade with India accounted for £373,000 imports and £298,000 exports, the rest being with the Arab coast, Iraq and Persia. This level of trade was not maintained in 1926 and 1927, and for the latter year (ended 31st March 1927) had fallen off to £348,000 imports and £92,000 exports, the latter figure being so low owing to the failure of the pearl fisheries, which had accounted for £180,000 in 1924–5. The imports from India were made up chiefly of piece-goods, rice, tea and sugar. The chief exports were of rice, sugar and piece-goods to other Persian Gulf ports by sailing craft.

Of the shipping calling at Koweit during the year 1926–7 all the steamers except one were British (84), the one exception being a German steamer. There was a great deal of sailing vessel traffic at the port, including over 1,000 entrances and clearances of both Iraqi (1,300) and Persian (1,200) craft.

The trade of Muscat during the years 1924–5, 1925–6 and 1926–7 reached the following totals:—£613,000, £674,000 and £474,000 respectively, in which the imports predominated, being generally twice the amount of exports. The trade is almost wholly with India, the figures for 1926–7 being £290,000 imports from India and £111,000 exports to India. The trade with the United Kingdom is small, consisting in 1926–7 of £9,405 imports. The chief imports from India are rice, cotton goods and coffee. The chief exports to that country are dates and dry sardines.



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(92)

There is very little trade with foreign countries beyond the Persian Gulf. The United States of America took considerable quantities of dates (Fard) in 1924–5, value £38,748, but this trade had fallen to £12,896 in 1926–7.

The trade of Muscat was entirely carried in British (including Indian) vessels in 1926–7, except for 2 Arab sailing vessels. There were 117 British steamers aggregating 400,000 net tonnage entering and clearing during that year, as well as 62 Indian sailing vessels aggregating 8,000 tons net, and the 2 Arab vessels referred to (of 270 tons net).

(c) **The position of British Trade in the Gulf.**

The first section of this Note deals in general terms with the question of trade in the Gulf: the second in some detail with the position of Koweit and Muscat. The present section deals principally with the British trade position and with the possible advantage or disadvantage to be derived from a purely political movement such as a formal reassertion of the special interest in the Gulf of His Majesty's Government.

British trade with the Persian Gulf consists of trade with (1) Persia (nearly all our trade with Persia is viâ the south, trade over the northern frontier being predominantly trade with Russia); (2) Iraq; and (3) Arab States. The last branch of our trade is relatively insignificant, but trade with Persia and Iraq is of substantial magnitude, as the following figures for 1927 show:—

—	Imports into the United Kingdom.	Exports from the United Kingdom.	
		United Kingdom Produce and Manufactures.	Re-exports.
	£	£	£
Persia	9,443,000	2,247,000	170,000
Iraq	1,709,000	2,080,000	142,000
Muscat and Trucial Oman ..	2,000	13,000	1,000
Other native Arab States ..	6,000	147,000	1,000

Details for 1927 are wanting, but in 1926 out of imports from Persia, amounting in value to £7,856,000, no less than £7,213,000 represented oil, crude and refined, other imports being gum, skins, dates, barley and carpets. Imports from Iraq in the same year amounted to £852,000, the principal headings being dates (£262,000), undressed leather (£145,000) and carpets (£103,000).

The predominant exports to Iraq are cotton manufactures, which also figure largely in our exports to Persia. They are, however, less than the similar exports to Iraq, and in 1926 were exceeded in value by the exports of iron and steel manufactures whilst exports of machinery were also considerable. The following figures show the exports under each of these headings and the total exports to Persia and Iraq respectively in 1926:—

—	Exports of the Produce and Manufactures of the United Kingdom in 1926.	
	Persia.	Iraq.
	£	£
Cotton manufactures	429,000	1,584,000
Iron and Steel manufactures	540,000	144,000
Machinery	234,000	199,000
Other goods	798,000	903,000
	2,001,000	2,830,000

In spite of our undoubted Treaty rights Russian goods admitted into Persia over the Northern frontier have for some years enjoyed the advantage of a lower tariff than that extended to British goods admitted over the Southern frontier, but Persia about a month ago introduced a Uniform tariff applicable to all frontiers and concluded a treaty with us by virtue of which British goods are secured against any form of customs discrimination. This Treaty is concluded for a period of eight years and we have every reason to hope that its provisions will be respected.

Iraq was placed under our Mandate by the Treaty of Versailles and by the terms of that Treaty and the mandate we were also secured against discrimination. The



mandate has itself been replaced by a specific Treaty between Great Britain and Iraq based however on the provisions of the mandate and equality of treatment for our goods is, therefore, assured in that country also.

So long as this Treaty position can be maintained, it is difficult to see how any further advantage to our general trade would arise from any such purely political movement as a declaration of our predominant interest in the Persian Gulf, such as that respecting the interests of the U.S.A. in the American Continent which is embodied in the Monroe declaration.

The only thing that can be said is that it would of course be to our great disadvantage if at any time either State should be induced to depart from this attitude and to give special preferences to some other country than ourselves. This, however, implies rather the desirability of maintaining the policy of the "open door" than either the necessity or desirability of an announcement of our special interest in the countries neighbouring on the Gulf.

The following tables show the imports into Persia and Iraq from the principal countries in the last three years :—

STATEMENT showing Total Imports into PERSIA during the years ended March 20, 1925, 1926 and 1927, distinguishing the Principal Countries whence derived.

(In 1,000 Krans.)

—	Years ended March 20.		
	1925.	1926.	1927.
Total Imports	*771,445*	*832,085*	*737,897*
Of which from—			
British Empire (except British India)	230,977	249,989	185,707
British India	214,365	217,770	199,902
Russia	125,670	211,764	184,484
Germany	25,069	32,696	39,350
France	32,364	24,447	37,621
Italy	12,164	29,569	29,726
Belgium	45,736	55,058	27,641
United States	6,284	10,251	20,676
Japan	7,828	9,858	11,910
Netherlands	26,717	18,506	10,642
Iraq	7,426	10,633	8,676
Turkey	19,456	13,266	7,499
Rate of Exchange, krans to £1	42·0	42·30	47·34

IRAQ.

VALUE of Imports from the undermentioned Countries (years ended March, except for 1927, which is for calendar year).

(In lakhs of rupees.)

—	1925–26.	1926–27.	1927.
United Kingdom	292	326	359
India	364	257	229
Persia	109	112	94
Holland	48	72	402 (Holland to All other countries)
Syria and Turkey	43	56	
Germany	36	37	
Italy	33	35	
Belgium	31	35	
France	30	31	
Egypt	22	9	
Austria	4	7	
All other countries	87	83	
Total	1,071	1,060	1,084
Rate of Exchange, rupee =	Pence. 18·115	Pence. 17·932	Pence. 17·334



Persian Coasting Trade.

(Communicated by the Board of Trade and revised to 24th October 1928.)

(Reference: P.G., 2nd Minutes, Conclusion (1).)

PRIOR to the recent negotiations with Persia, which resulted in the signature of the Tariff Autonomy Treaty of the 10th May last, the Treaty rights of British ships in Persia were those conferred by Article 4 of the Anglo-Persian Agreement of 1920, which provided, in effect, for most-favoured-nation and national treatment in all matters relating to Navigation for the ships of either party in the territories of the other. This arrangement went further than any existing Treaty between this country and any other foreign Power, in that it applied in full to the coasting trade as well as to the foreign trade. It had, incidentally, the effect of conferring upon Persian vessels an absolute right to engage in the coasting trade in this country, and *vice versâ*, and was the only surviving case in which such an absolute Treaty right and obligation existed. The general practice which has been followed in our other Commercial Treaties has been to exclude the coasting trade from the scope of the clauses providing for national treatment of ships, but to grant, and to require, most-favoured-nation treatment in respect of the coasting trade. Accordingly, the result of the Anglo-Persian Agreement, when taken in conjunction with all the other most-favoured-nation Treaties and arrangements, is that not only Persian ships, but ships of other Powers with which we have treaties in force, have an absolute right to partake in the coasting trade of the United Kingdom, even though, as is often the case, they themselves reserve their own coasting trade to national ships.

Although we may not have any intention of closing the coasting trade in this country to any foreign vessels at the present time, it is obviously desirable that the obligation to allow all foreign vessels to participate therein should be got rid of, as it is clearly unreasonable that we should remain thus bound by treaty in a world in which so large a number of the principal maritime Powers exclude British ships from this trade. On the other hand, in Persia itself our ships have enjoyed this facility, and whatever it may be worth it seems desirable to hold on to it if possible. Taking, therefore, both of these considerations into account, an effort was made during the recent negotiations with Persia which led to the conclusion of the Tariff Autonomy Treaty to induce the Persian Government to accept a Protocol to the Treaty to the effect that existing Treaties should not be held to confer on the vessels of either party the right to participate in the coasting trade of the other, but that British ships were to continue to be allowed to engage in the Persian coasting trade so long as Persian vessels were allowed in the coasting trade of the United Kingdom. The Persians appear not to have understood this proposal, or, at any rate, to have disliked it, and time being short it was dropped in favour of the maintenance of the *status quo* which was effected in an exchange of Notes. The present position, therefore, pending the conclusion of a new Commercial Treaty, remains the same as it has been for many years past. Although the solution suggested by His Majesty's Government is no doubt the best from the point of view of British interests, for it gets rid of a Treaty anomaly whilst maintaining our rights in Persia until such time at least as we decide to close our own coasting trade, it is perhaps not altogether surprising that it did not appeal to the Persian mind, as it is not based on any real reciprocity, even in form, and the open coasting trade of the United Kingdom is of no practical value whatever to Persia. As will be seen from the annexed Note on the extent of our shipping interests in Persia, the coasting trade of Persia is of no very great importance to us, and although we might in the forthcoming negotiations for a new Treaty of Commerce and Navigation put forward a proposal similar to that made in connection with the Tariff Autonomy negotiations, namely, that British vessels should be permitted to engage in the Persian coasting trade so long as Persian vessels are permitted to engage in the coasting trade in this country, it would not involve any great sacrifice if this clause had to be dropped and we were left in the same position as we are in the case of most countries with which we have Commercial Treaties. We shall, therefore, no doubt, in these negotiations do well to be satisfied with the navigation clauses which are contained in our usual Treaties, including one which will have the effect of excepting the coasting trade from the operation of the clauses providing for national treatment of ships whilst securing most-favoured-nation rights. There is in any



case no great likelihood of Persia seeking to close her coasting trade to British ships in the near future, as certain other Powers have done, as there is reason to think that she recognises the advantages of the services in this matter performed by British shipping, and so long as our ships have equal rights with those of any other foreign nationality the existing position is likely to be maintained, Persian shipping being inadequate for the purpose.

It should perhaps be observed that the coasting trade, which is spoken of in this memorandum is the coasting trade in the strict sense, that is to say (in the case of Persia) the carriage from one Persian port to another of Persian goods or Persian passengers. It does not, of course, include the voyages from one Persian port to another of ships engaged in the foreign trade for the purpose of landing at a succession of such ports persons or cargoes brought from abroad, or taking up at a succession of such ports persons or cargoes bound for a foreign destination. It is of great importance to British shipping that the right to continue trade of this description should be maintained, and provisions to this effect are always included in our Treaties.

Annex.

Share of British Shipping in the Persian Coasting Trade.

The bulk of the overseas trade of Persia is carried in British ships, as is shown by the following figures, taken from the Persian Official Report for the year 1925-26, the latest period for which statistics are available. These figures show the nett tonnage of ships cleared outwards from Persian ports, and the quantity of cargo exported in these ships :—

Flag.	(Thousands of tons.) Nett tonnage.	Cargo exported.
British	8,981	4,549
Persian	182	35
German	133	7
Other	58	9
Total	9,354	4,600

Foreign shipping takes very little, if any, part in the coastwise traffic between Persian ports, and the total volume of this traffic is small compared with the volume of the sea-borne traffic between Persia and other countries. The only line which can be regarded as having a regular service in the Persian coasting trade is the British India Line, which runs two weekly services from Bombay and Karachi to the Persian Gulf. One of these, the "fast mail" service, touches only in Persia at Bushire, and Mohammerah, but the other, the "subsidiary mail" service, touches at about a dozen ports in the Persian Gulf, zigzagging from one side of the Gulf to the other. The majority of these ports, Charbar, Jask, Bunder Abbas, Henjam, Lingah, Bushire and Mohammerah, are in Persia. The British India Company inform us that during the twelve months ending the 30th June, 1928, the quantity of Persian inter-coastal cargo handled was slightly below 500 freight tons, and the number of passengers carried, approximately 2,500. By far the greatest movement of cargo is from Mohammerah to Bunder Abbas, while the principal passenger trade is between Mohammerah and Bushire in both directions. During this period the opportunities offering for shipment by steamers other than those of that company were nil, so far as they are aware, and therefore these figures may be taken to represent practically the whole of the steamer traffic between Persian ports from the Shatt-el-Arab to the Gulf of Oman. It appears, however, that one or two India-owned steamers make occasional voyages from Bombay and Karachi to the Persian Gulf, and may carry coastwise cargo and passengers, and that a certain number of Indian "country craft" (native sailing vessels) also engage from time to time in the coasting trade.

The British India Company point out that though this traffic between Persian ports is relatively small, any interference with its free movement by steamer would be a serious matter, as their steamers are already obliged to call at those ports and the loss of inter-port earnings would consequently mean a net loss to practically the same extent on a service of which the financial results have recently been far from satisfactory.



APPENDIX.

Precis of the Treaties and Engagements between the British Government and the Chiefs of the Arabian Coast of the Persian Gulf.

(Communicated by India Office and revised to 29th September 1928.)

KOWEIT.

(*a*) **Agreement dated 23rd January 1899.**—The Sheikh pledged himself and his heirs and successors not to receive the Agent or Representative of any Power or Government at Koweit . . . , without the previous sanction of the British Government . . . and not to cede, sell, lease or mortgage or give for occupation or for any other purpose any portion of his territory to the Government or subjects of any other Power, without the previous consent of His Majesty's Government.

(*b*) Letter from Lieut.-Col. Meade, Political Resident in the Persian Gulf, to the Sheikh of Koweit, dated 23rd January 1899, accompanying (*a*):—The Sheikh was formally assured "of the good offices of the British Government towards you, your heirs and successors as long as you, your heirs and successors scrupulously and faithfully observe the conditions of the said bond (*i.e.* the agreement above)."

NOTE.—In 1911, when the text of the Agreement of 1899 was communicated to the Turkish Government, the text of Col. Meade's accompanying letter was not similarly communicated; but the Turkish Government was told in Sir E. Grey's covering note that "His Majesty's Government have informed the Sheikh of Koweit that so long as he and his heirs and successors act up to their obligations under the Agreement, His Majesty's Government undertake to support them and accord them their good offices. His Majesty's Government reserve to themselves the right to interpret that term at their discretion." The attitude adopted at the time by His Majesty's Government towards this undertaking is illustrated by the following extract from India Office letter dated the 30th October 1911 to the Foreign Office:—"The term 'good offices' . . . is a conveniently vague one, and Lord Crewe is of opinion that it is neither necessary nor safe to go beyond it. The action taken by His Majesty's Government in 1901-2, when men and guns were landed at Koweit to defend it against unprovoked Turkish aggression, will, moreover, have made it plain to the Porte in what way we are prepared to interpret the term if necessity arises."

(*c*) **Agreement of the Sheikh of Koweit, dated 24th May 1900,** to prohibit the importation of arms into, and their exportation from, Koweit.

(*d*) **Postal Agreement, dated 28th February 1904,** giving His Majesty's Government the sole right to erect a post office at Koweit.

(*e*) **Secret Agreement, dated 15th October 1907, for the lease of the Bander Shweikh foreshore.**—In the fifth article of the two documents constituting the agreement the Sheikh reaffirmed his pledge not to cede, sell, &c., any Koweit territory to any foreign Government or foreign subject without His Majesty's Government's permission.

In the ninth, the British Government promised that "the town of Koweit and its boundaries belong to . . . the Sheikh of Koweit and to his heirs after him, and that all Sheikh Mubarak's arrangements in the matter of customs, &c., and his arrangements at the present day shall remain in the hands of Sheikh Mubarak-as-Subah, ruler of Koweit, and his heirs after him . . ."

NOTE.—The lease, or rather the payment of rent for the Bunder Shweikh site, was terminated in 1922. It does not appear, however, that the agreement was abrogated, and the reciprocal pledges, so far as they are not affected by other subsequent instruments, presumably remain binding.



(*f*) **Pearl fishing and Oil.**—The Sheikh undertook in 1911 not to grant a pearl fishing concession to foreigners save with the prior approval of His Majesty's Government. He gave a similar undertaking as regards oil in 1913.

(*g*) **Letter dated 3rd November 1914** from the Political Resident to the Sheikh, in which the Sheikh was given, in return for his co-operation against the Turks, certain assurances of which the third was that "Koweit shall be recognised as an independent principality under British protection."

(*h*) The undertakings given to Sheikh Mubarak were renewed in 1917 to his son Jabir, and again, on his accession, to the latter's successor, his brother Salim. To Salim, who proved troublesome, Government in 1918 gave a warning that the assurances conveyed to him on his accession were conditional on his good behaviour. (See Memorandum on Koweit on page 76, para. 20.)

(*i*) In a Kharita delivered on 19th July 1921 the Viceroy renewed to the present Sheikh, Ahmad al Jabir, nephew of Salim, the assurances given to the latter.

BAHREIN.

Aitchison, Vol. XII, p. 172.

(*a*) In 1820 the Ruler of Bahrein subscribed to the general treaty with the Arab Chiefs of the Persian Gulf, which prescribed abstention from plunder and piracy by land and sea, from slave traffic, and from inter-tribal war, and peace with the British Government. (The adherence of Bahrein to this treaty gave the British Government a formal right to intervene, as it did in 1863, between Bahrein, Abu Dhabi and Katr, and again in 1867–9.)

Do., p. 178.
Do., p. 148.

(*b*) In 1847 the Sheikh of Bahrein subscribed to an engagement for the abolition of slave trade in his ports and for the submission of Bahreini vessels to search by British cruisers for slaves, and to seizure if guilty, and in 1856 signed a further engagement for the better suppression of the slave trade.

Do., p. 184.

(*c*) On the 31st May 1861 Sheikh Mahomed bin Khalifa signed on behalf of himself and his heirs and successors a "perpetual treaty of peace and friendship with the British Government."

In Article 2 he agreed to abstain from maritime aggression, war, piracy and slavery by sea "so long as I receive the support of the British Government in the maintenance of the security of my own possessions against similar aggressions directed against them by the Chiefs and tribes of this Gulf."

In Article 3 he undertook to refer to the arbitration of the Political Resident cases of aggression **by sea** on Bahrein or Bahreinis and to refrain from retaliation without the Political Resident's assent. "And the British Resident engages that he will forthwith take the necessary steps for obtaining reparation for every injury . . . by sea upon Bahrein or . . . its dependencies."

Do., p. 182.

(*d*) On 22nd December 1880 Sheikh Isa signed an agreement binding himself and his successors not to enter into negotiations with any State or Government other than the British without the consent of the British Government, and to prevent the establishment of diplomatic or consular agencies or coaling depôts, other than British, without the consent of the British Government.

"This engagement does not apply to or affect the customary friendly correspondence with the local authorities of neighbouring States on business of minor importance."

Do., p. 183.

(*e*) On the 13th March 1892 Sheikh Isa signed a further agreement the first two articles of which reaffirmed his undertaking to abstain from relations with foreign Governments; in the third article he undertook "on no account to cede, sell, mortgage, or otherwise give for occupation any part of my territory save to the British Government."

P. 711/98.

(*f*) In 1898 the Sheikh of Bahrein signed an agreement to prohibit the traffic in arms in Bahrein territory.



(85)

(g) In 1911 the Sheikh agreed not to allow any foreign Power to open a Post Office in Bahrein, and not to grant a pearl fishing or sponge fishing concession to foreigners. In 1914 he agreed not to search for oil himself or give others permission to do so without consulting the Political Agent and receiving the approval of the Government of India.

EL-KATR.

(a) In 1868, as a result of hostilities initiated in Katr by the Sheikh of Bahrein in co-operation with the Sheikh of Abu Dhabi, and continued by a retaliatory attack on Bahrein by Katr, Sheikh Mahomed bin Thani executed an agreement to abstain from hostilities and to accept the arbitration of the Resident, particularly in disputes as to the tribute payable to the Sheikh of Bahrein, to whom the Sheikhs of Katr were then in some degree subordinated.

(b) Shortly after, the Turks established themselves in Katr; and though the British authorities did not hesitate to have direct dealings with the Sheikhs of Katr, no written agreement was made with them.

(c) In the course of the negotiations with the Turkish Government in 1913 it was agreed that the southern and eastern limit of "le Sandjak Ottoman de Nedjd" should be a "une ligne partant du fond extrême du golfe faisant face à l'île de Zahnounie (i.e. the Bay of Salwa to the west of El Katr) qui ira directement au sud jusqu'au Ruba'-al-Khali et séparera le Nedjd de la presqu'île de l'El-Katr." Further, it was agreed that "le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique—ne permettra pas au cheikh de Bahrein de s'immiscer dans les affaires intérieures d'el-Katr, de porter atteinte à l'autonomie de ce pays ou de l'annexer."

(d) The separation of El Katr from Nejd and its independence of Bahrein having been thus established (though not thereby given effect), the way was open for the conclusion of a **Treaty signed on 3rd November 1916** after the Turks had finally been expelled from El-Katr in the course of the war.

In this treaty the Sheikh takes note of, undertakes the obligations resulting from, and is promised the advantages accruing from the various engagements concluded by the Trucial Chiefs for the suppression of slave trade and piracy and the preservation of the maritime peace. Articles I and II.

In Article III he undertakes to prohibit arms trade in Katr and to observe the arms traffic rules of the British Government.

In Articles IV and V he undertakes to have no relations with the Agent of any other Power without the consent of the British Government, or to cede land by lease, sale or gift or to grant monopolies, concessions or cable landing rights.

In Articles VII, VIII and IX he undertakes to protect British residents and, if required, receive a British representative, and establish a British post and telegraph office.

In return the British Government undertakes in Articles X and XI to protect the Sheikh, his subjects and territory from all aggression **by sea**, and to grant their good offices should he or his subjects be assailed **by land** within the territories of Qatar; it being understood that this obligation only applies in the event of such aggression by land or by sea being unprovoked by the Sheikh or his subjects.

NOTE.—From para. 10 of the Memorandum on the Trucial Chiefs on p. 88 it will be seen that on the question being raised by the Sheikh in 1921 of the assistance which he might expect from Government in the event of an attack by Ibn Saud, he was informed that His Majesty's Government were not prepared to promise more than diplomatic assistance.

TRUCIAL COAST (Ras-ul-Khaima, Abu Dhabi, Dabai, Shargah, Ajman, Umm al Qaiwain).

(a) In 1820 these chiefs signed the general treaty (see Bahrein (a)) prescribing perpetual abstention from plunder and piracy by land and sea, and from irregular (i.e. unproclaimed) war; registration of dhows; peace with the British Government; abstention from the carrying off or transport of slaves; free entry of their ships into British ports; **"and if any shall attack them the British Government shall take notice of it."** *

* "Them" in the context appears to mean the ships of the signatory Chiefs; but it may mean the Chiefs.



"ملخص تاريخي للأحداث في أراضي الإمبراطورية العثمانية، فارس وشبه الجزيرة العربية التي تؤثر على الموقف البريطاني في الخليج الفارسي، ١٩٠٧-١٩٢٨" [‎٨٥ظ] (١٨٨/١٧٧)

(*b*) In 1838, 1839 and 1847 agreements were entered into by these Chiefs for the suppression of slave trade, and for the search and, if necessary, seizure by British warships of any of their vessels suspected of engaging in this trade.

(*c*) In 1843 a Maritime Truce for ten years was signed by these Chiefs "being fully impressed with a sense of the evil consequences arising from our subjects and dependents being prevented from carrying on the pearl fishery without interruption on the banks, owing to the various feuds existing among ourselves." This Truce cancelled the right of the Chiefs, implied in the general Treaty of 1820, to wage regular war on each other. Under the Truce they agreed to refer disputes and cases of aggression to the decision of the Political Resident. In 1853 the Truce was renewed in perpetuity.

(*d*) In 1892 exclusive agreements were signed by all the Trucial Chiefs, on behalf of themselves, their heirs and successors, that they will on no account enter into any agreement or correspondence with any Power other than the British Government; that without the consent of the British Government they will not consent to the residence in their territories of the agent of any other Government; and that they will on no account cede, sell, mortgage, or otherwise give for occupation, any part of their territories, save to the British Government.

(*e*) In 1902 the Chiefs undertook to prohibit the importation of arms into, and their exportation from their territories.

(*f*) In 1911 the Sheikhs undertook not to give pearling or sponge fishing concessions, save with the prior approval of His Majesty's Government.

(*g*) In 1922 similar undertakings were given regarding oil.

OMAN (MUSCAT).

(i) Treaties and Agreements with Great Britain.

Aitchison, Vol. XII, p. 287.

(*a*) Treaty relations date from 1798, when an agreement was made by the Imam with the East India Company to exclude the French and Dutch from his territories "whilst warfare shall continue between the English Company and them."

(*b*) **In 1822 a Treaty for Suppression of the Slave Trade** was signed, providing *inter alia* for action by the Imam's officers in Muscat territory, and for seizure, outside certain limits, by the British of any vessels carrying slaves to Christian countries.

(*c*) **In 1839 a Commercial Treaty** was concluded on a reciprocal most-favoured-nation basis, providing for the purchase, sale or hire of lands by British subjects in Muscat territory, appointment of Consuls, protection of Muscat subjects in British employ, **extraterritoriality** for British subjects, unrestricted trade, limitation of import duties to 5 per cent. and freedom from export duties.

Do., pp. 220, 221.

(*d*) In 1839 and 1845 further enactments reinforced the right of British vessels to detain and search and if necessary confiscate Muscat ships suspected of carrying slaves, outside certain limits.

Do., p. 226.

(*e*) In 1862 an **Anglo-French Declaration** was signed under which the French Government and Her Majesty's Government engaged reciprocally to respect the independence of the Sultans of Muscat and Zanzibar.

Do., p. 227.

(*f*) In 1864 the Sultan agreed to permit the construction of, and to protect, one or more telegraph lines in his own territories or in those leased by him from Persia. But no sovereign right was to be conferred on the British Government over any such territory. This was followed in 1865 by a similar convention in respect of His Highness' territories in Arabia and Mekran.

Do., p. 228.

Do., p. 230.

(*g*) **In 1873 a further Treaty for the Abolition of the Slave Trade** was concluded. This extended the powers of seizure possessed by British vessels **to include seizure of Muscat vessels trading between Muscat ports**: the Sultan undertook to shut all slave markets in his dominions and to protect liberated slaves.

Do., p. 231.

(*h*) **In 1891 a new Treaty of Commerce, Friendship and Navigation** was concluded, which cancelled the Treaty of 1839, but was framed on similar lines. Coals, provisions, &c., for Her Majesty's ships were to be exempt from duty (Art. 6). No export duties were to be levied without the consent of Her Majesty's Government. This treaty, like that of 1839, provided a capitulatory regime for British subjects.



(*i*) In 1891 an agreement was also signed by the Sultan, pledging him never to cede, sell, mortgage or otherwise give in occupation any of his dominions or dependencies, save to the British Government. Aitchison, Vol. XII, p. 240.

(*j*) In 1895 a guarantee was given to the Sultan that, whatever the differences between the Sheikhs of Oman and the Sultan, Government would not allow the former to attack the two towns of Muscat and Mattrah. The Sultan issued a notification in these terms. The warning was renewed in 1913. P. 2740/13.

(*k*) In 1898 a proclamation was issued giving British and Persian vessels the right to search British, Persian or Muscat vessels in Muscat waters, and Muscat vessels in British or Persian waters, for arms and ammunition. Aitchison, Vol. XII, p. 241.

(*l*) In 1902 the Sultan undertook to grant His Majesty's Government the first option on mining rights in the Sur coalfields. Ibid., p. 242.

(*m*) In 1903 the Sultan issued a notification authorising the searching by British and Italian ships, both on the high seas and in Muscat waters, of Muscat vessels suspected of carrying arms to certain prohibited African areas. Memo. B, p. 172.

(*n*) In 1923 the Sultan undertook not to give any oil concession without the consent of His Majesty's Government.

(ii) Treaties with other Powers.

(*a*) In 1833 the Sultan concluded a Treaty of Amity and Commerce with the **United States of America** providing for perpetual peace, unrestricted trading (except that muskets and ammunition might not be sold to private persons in Zanzibar), limitation of import duties to 5 per cent., reciprocal most-favoured-nation treatment in regard to trading charges, and appointment of consuls. Ibid., p. CLX.

(*b*) In 1844 a Treaty of Commerce was concluded with **France** in terms almost identical with the British Treaty of 1839.

(*c*) In 1877 a short Treaty with **Holland** provided reciprocal most-favoured-nation treatment for the nationals of each country, both generally and in respect of import duty and the regulations regarding export and transit. Ibid., p. CLXXX.

SUMMARY.

1. The following are common to the engagements of all the above Arab States to the British Government:—

The undertaking not to cede, sell, mortgage, &c., any of their territory except to the British Government, or to give any oil concession without permission.

The undertaking to prohibit the traffic of arms in their territories, and (except in the case of Koweit) the undertaking to suppress slave trade.

2. The following is common to all, except Muscat:—

The undertaking to have no negotiations with, or receive the representative of, any Power other than the British Government, except with the consent of the British Government, and the undertaking not to give any pearling or sponge fishing concession without permission.

3. The following is common to all except Koweit, and it is implied in the case of Koweit:—

The undertaking to maintain peace in perpetuity with the British Government.

4. To all, except Muscat, the British Government promises protection from aggression by sea, either explicitly or, as to the Trucial Chiefs, by implication.

5. To El-Katr the British Government promises also "good offices" in the case of aggression by land.

6. To Koweit the British Government undertakes unqualified "protection."

Communication of Treaties.

1. To the Turkish Government in 1911.

All the treaties prior to 1911 regarding Koweit, El Katr, and the Trucial Chiefs mentioned in this Memorandum, with the addition of one or two



minor agreements not mentioned, but without the Bunder Shweikh Secret Agreement (Koweit (*d*)), were communicated to the Porte in connection with the general negotiations for the Anglo-Turkish Agreement. (See also Note on Koweit (*b*)).

2. To Ibn Saud in 1927.

Article 6 of the Treaty of Jeddah (1927) runs as follows:—

"His Majesty the King of the Hedjaz and of Nejd and its dependencies undertakes to maintain friendly and peaceful relations with the territories of Koweit and Bahrein, and with the Sheikhs of Qatar and the Oman Coast, who are in special treaty relations with His Britannic Majesty's Government."

Jeddah Desp. 193, Dec. 4 1927, P. 7838.

The Foreign Office have accordingly communicated to Ibn Saud copies of the treaties given to Turkey in 1911, together with the El Katr treaty of 1916, and a complete set of the Muscat treaties with His Majesty's Government as published in Aitchison. He has also been informed of the "good offices" accorded to Koweit, and of the provisions of Article 9 of the Bunder Shweikh Agreement.

3. To the Persian Government.

F.O. tel. 196, Sept. 4 1928.

In September 1928 His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires, Teheran, was instructed to communicate to the Persian Government the text of the exclusive agreements of 1892 with the Trucial Chiefs. This was done in a Note dated 7th September 1928.

Teh. Desp. 591, Sept. 7 1928.





"ملخص تاريخي للأحداث في أراضي الإمبراطورية العثمانية، فارس وشبه الجزيرة العربية التي تؤثر على الموقف البريطاني في الخليج الفارسي، ١٩٠٧-١٩٢٨" [‎٨٦ظأ] (١٨٨/١٨١)



‘بلاد فارس وأفغانستان. خريطة I’ [‎٨٧و] (‎١/‏٢)

PERSIA AND AFGHANISTAN

MAP I.



‘بلاد فارس وأفغانستان. خريطة ا’ [٨٧ظ] (٢/٢)



'خريطة تبين (أ) الطرق الجوية، الحالية والمتوقعة؛ (ب) جزر في الخليج العربي؛ (ج) حدود الكويت والمنطقة المهادنة. خريطة II' [٨٨و] (٢/١)

MAP SHOWING (A) AIR ROUTES, ESTABLISHED AND PROJECTED. (B) ISLANDS IN THE PERSIAN GULF
(C) BOUNDARIES OF KUWAIT AND THE TRUCIAL AREA

MAP II

SECRET



'خريطة تبين (أ) الطرق الجوية، الحالية والمتوقعة؛ (ب) جزر في الخليج العربي؛ (ج) حدود الكويت والمنطقة المهادنة. خريطة II' [٨٨ظ] (٢/٢)



"ملخص تاريخي للأحداث في أراضي الإمبراطورية العثمانية، فارس وشبه الجزيرة العربية التي تؤثر على الموقف البريطاني في الخليج الفارسي، ١٩٠٧-١٩٢٨" [٨٩و] (١٨٨/١٨٦)



"ملخص تاريخي للأحداث في أراضي الإمبراطورية العثمانية، فارس وشبه الجزيرة العربية التي تؤثر على الموقف البريطاني في الخليج الفارسي، ١٩٠٧-١٩٢٨" [٨٩ظ] (١٨٨/١٨٧)



"ملخص تاريخي للأحداث في أراضي الإمبراطورية العثمانية، فارس وشبه الجزيرة العربية التي تؤثر على الموقف البريطاني في الخليج الفارسي، ١٩٠٧-١٩٢٨" [خلفي-داخلي] (١٨٨/١٨٨)

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